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INTRODUCTION.

WHEN master hands like those of Gibbon and Hallam have sketched the life of *Boethius*, it is well that no meaner man should attempt to mar their pictures. They drew, perhaps, the most touching scene in Middle-age literary history,—the just man in prison, awaiting death, consoled by the Philosophy that had been his light in life, and handing down to posterity for their comfort and strength the presence of her whose silver rays had been his guide as well under the stars of Fortune as the mirk of Fate. With Milton in his dark days, Boece in prison could say,—

‘I argue not
Against Heaven’s hand or will, nor bate a jot
Of heart or hope; but still bear up and steer
Right onward. What supports me, dost thou ask?
The conscience, friend, to have lost them overplied
In liberty’s defence, my noble task,
Of which all Europe rings from side to side.’

For, indeed, the echoes of Boethius, Boethius, rang out loud from every corner of European Literature. An Alfred awoke them in England, a Chaucer, a Caxton would not let them die; an Elizabeth revived them among the glorious music of her reign.¹ To us, though far off, they come with a sweet sound. ‘The angelic’ Thomas Aquinas commented on him, and many others followed the saint’s steps. Dante read him, though, strange to say, he speaks of the

¹ Other translations are by John Walton of Osney, in verse, in 1410 (Reg. MS. 18, A 13), first printed at Tavistock in 1525, and to be edited some time or other for the E. E. T. S. An anonymous prose version in the Bodleian. George Colville, alias Coldewel, 1556; J. T. 1609; H. Conningesbye, 1664; Lord Preston, 1695, 1712; W. Causton, 1730; Redpath, 1785; R. Duncan, 1789; anon. 1792 (Lowndes).

Consolation as 'a book not known by many.'¹ Belgium had her translations—both Flemish² and French³; Germany hers,⁴ France hers,⁵ Italy hers.⁶ The Latin editors are too numerous to be catalogued here, and manuscripts abound in all our great libraries.

No philosopher was so bone of the bone and flesh of the flesh of Middle-age writers as Boethius. Take up what writer you will, and you find not only the sentiments, but the very words of the distinguished old Roman. And surely we who read him in Chaucer's tongue, will not refuse to say that his full-circling meed of glory was other than deserved. Nor can we marvel that at the end of our great poet's life, he was glad that he had swelled the chorus of Boethius' praise; and 'of the translacioun of Boece de Consolacioun,' thanked 'oure Lord Ihesu Crist and his moder, and alle the seintes in heuen.'

The impression made by Boethius on Chaucer was evidently very deep. Not only did he translate him directly, as in the present work, but he read his beloved original over and over again, as witness the following list, incomplete of course, of passages from Chaucer's poems translated more or less literally from the *De Consolatione*:

I. LOVE.

Wost thou nat wel the olde clerkes sawe,
That who schal yeve a lover eny lawe,
Love is a grettere lawe, by my pan,
Then may be yeve to (of) eny erthly man?

(*Knights Tale, Aldine Series*, vol. ii. p. 36, 37.)

But what is he þat may ȝeue a lawe to loueres. loue is a gretter lawe and a strengere to hym self þan any lawe þat men may ȝeuen.

(*Chaucer's Prose Translation*, p. 108.)

Quis legem det amantibus?

Major lex amor est sibi.—(Boeth., lib. iii. met. 12.)

¹ Dante, in his *Convito*, says, "Misimi a legger quello *non conosciuto da molti* libro di Boesio, nel quale captivo e discacciato consolato s'avea."

² Printed at Ghent, 1485.

³ By Reynier de Seinct Trudon, printed at Bruges, 1477.

⁴ An old version of the 11th cent., printed by Graff, and a modern one printed at Nuremberg, 1473.

⁵ By Jean de Méung, printed at Paris, 1494.

⁶ By Varchi, printed at Florence, 1551; Parma, 1798.

II. A DRUNKEN MAN.

A dronke man wot wel he hath an hous,
But he not¹ which the righte wey is thider.

(*Knights Tale*, vol. ii. p. 39.)

Ryzt as a dronke man not nat² by whiche pape he may retourne home to hys house.—(Chaucer's Trans., p. 67.)

Sed velut ebrius, domum quo tramite revertatur, ignorat.

(Boeth., lib. iii. pr. 2.)

III. THE CHAIN OF LOVE.

The firste moevere of the cause above,
Whan he first made the fayre cheyne of love,
Gret was theeffect, and heigh was his entente ;
Wel wist he why, and what therof he mente ;
*For with that faire cheyne of love he bond
The fyr, the watir, the eyr, and eek the lond
In certeyn boundes, that they may not flee.*

(*Knights Tale*, p. 92.)

That þe world with stable feith / varieth acordable chaungynges // þat the contraryos qualite of elementȝ holden amonge hem self aliaunce perdurable / þat phebus the sonne with his goldene chariet / bryngeth forth the rosene day / þat the mone hath commaundement ouer the nyhtes // whiche nyhtes hesperus the eue sterre hat[h] browt // þat þe se gredy to flouen constreyneth with a certeyn ende hise floodes / so þat it is nat l[e]ueful to strechche hise brode termes or bowndes vp-on the erthes // þat is to seyn to couere alle the erthe // Al this a-cordaunce of thinges is bownden with looue / þat gouerneth erthe and see / and [he] hath also commaundementȝ to the heuenes / and yif this looue slakede the brydelis / alle thinges þat now louen hem to-gederes / wolden maken a batayle contynuely and stryuen to fordoon the fasoun of this worlde / the which they now leden in acordable feith by fayre moeuyngeȝ // this looue halt to-gideres poeples / ioyned with an hooly bond / and knytteth sacrament of maryages of chaste looues // And loue enditeth lawes to trewe felawes // O weleful weere mankynde / yif thilke loue þat gouerneth heuene governed yowre corages /—(*Chaucer's Boethius*, bk. ii. met. 8.)

Quod mundus stabili fide
Concordes variat vices,
Quod pugnantia semina
Fœdus perpetuum tenent,
Quod Phœbus roseum diem
Curru provehit aureo,
Ut quas duxerit Hesperus

¹ The Harl. MS. reads *not nat*, to the confusion of the metre.

² = ne wot nat = knows not.

Phœbe noctibus imperet,
 Ut fluctus avidum mare
 Certo fine coerceat,
 Ne terris liceat vagis
 Latos tundere terminos ;
Hanc rerum seriem ligat,
Terras ac pelagus regens,
Et cælo imperitans amor.
 Hic si fræna remiserit,
 Quicquid nunc amat invicem,
 Bellum continuo geret :
 Et quam nunc socia fide
 Pulcris motibus incitant,
 Certent solvere machinam.
 Hic sancto populos quoque
 Junctos fœdere continet,
 Hic et conjugii sacrum
 Castis nectit amoribus,
 Hic fidis etiam sua
 Dictat jura sodalibus.
 O felix hominum genus,
 Si vestros animos amor,
 Quo cælum regitur, regat.—(*Boeth.*, lib. ii. met. 8.)

Love, that of erth and se hath governaunee !
 Love, that his hestes hath in hevене hye !
 Love, that with an holsom alliaunce
 Halt peples joyned, as hym liste hem gyo !
 Love, that knetteth law and compaignye,
 And couples doth in vertu for to dwelle !
 (*Troilus & Cryseyde*, st. 243, vol. iv. p. 296.)

That, that the world with faith, which that is stable
 Dyverseth so, his stoundes concordynge ;—
 That elementz, that ben so discordable,
 Holden a bond, perpetually durynge ;—
 That Phebus mot his rosy carte forth brynge,
 And that the mone hath lordschip overe the nyghte ;—
 Al this doth Love, ay heryod be his myght !

That, that the se, that gredy is to flowen,
 Constreyneth to a certeyn ende so
 Hise flodes, that so fiersly they ne growen
 To drenchen erth and alle for everemo ;
 And if that Love aught lete his brydel go,
 Al that now loveth asonder sholde lepe,
 And lost were al that Love halt now to kepe.
 (*Ibid.* st. 244, 245.)

IV. MUTABILITY DIRECTED AND LIMITED BY AN IMMUTABLE AND
DIVINE INTELLIGENCE.

That same prynce and moevere eek, quod he,
Hath stabled, in this wrecched world adoun,
Certeyn dayes and duracioun
To alle that er engendrid in this place,
Over the whiche day they may nat pace,
Al mowe they yit wel here dayes abregge ;

.
Than may men wel by this ordre discerne
That thilke moevere stabul is and eterne.

.
And therefore of his wyse purveaunce
He hath so wel biset his ordenaunce,
That spices of thinges and progressiouns
Schullen endure by successiouns
And nat eterne be, withoute any lye.

(*Knights Tale*, vol. ii. p. 92, 93.)

þe engendrynge of alle þinges quod she and alle þe progressiouns
of muuablenature. and alle þat moeuþ in any manere takip hys causes.
hys ordre. and hys formes. of þe stablenesse of þe deuyne þouzt [and
thilke deuyne thouht] þat is yset and put in þe toure. þat is to seyne
in þe heyzt of þe simplicité of god. stablisip many manere gyses to
þinges þat ben to don.—(*Chaucer's Boethius*, bk. iv. pr. 6, p. 134.)

V. THE PART IS DERIVED FROM THE WHOLE, THE IMPERFECT
FROM THE PERFECT.

Wel may men knowe, but it be a fool,
That every partye dryyveth from his hool.
For nature hath nat take his bygynnyng
Of no partye ne cantel of a thing,
But of a thing that parfyt is and stable,
Descendyng so, til it be corumpable.

(*Knights Tale*, vol. ii. p. 92.)

For al þing þat is cleped inperfit . is proued inperfit by þe
amenusynge of perfeccioun . or of þing þat is perfit . and her-of comeþ
it . þat in euery þing general . yif þat . þat men seen any þing þat is
inperfit . certys in þilke general þer mot ben somme þing þat is perfit.
For yif so be þat perfeccioun is don away . men may nat þinke nor seye
fro whennes þilke þing is þat is cleped inperfit . For þe nature of þinges
ne token nat her bygynnyng of þinges amenused and inperfit . but it
procedip of þingus þat ben al hool . and absolut . and descendþ so
doune in-to outerest þinges and in-to þingus empty and wip-outte fruyt .

but as I haue shewed a litel her byforne . þat yif þer be a blisfulnesse
þat be frele and vein and inperfit . þer may no man doute . þat þer nys
som blisfulnesse þat is sad stedfast and perfit.'—(bk. iii. pr. 10, p. 89.)

Omne enim quod imperfectum esse dicitur, id deminutione perfecti
imperfectum esse perhibetur. Quo fit ut si in quolibet genere imper-
fectum quid esse videatur, in eo perfectum quoque aliquod esse necesse
sit. Etenim perfectione sublata, unde illud, quod imperfectum perhibe-
tur, extiterit, ne fingi quidem potest. *Neque enim ab diminutis incon-
summatisque natura rerum cepit exordium, sed ab integris absolutisque
procedens in hæc extrema atque effecta dilabitur.* Quod si, uti paulo ante
monstravimus, est quædam boni fragilis imperfecta felicitas, esse aliquam
solidam perfectamque non potest dubitari.—(*Boeth.*, lib. iii. pr. 10.)

VI. GENTILITY.

For gentilnesse nys but renoué
Of thin auncestres, for her heigh bounté
Which is a straunge thing to thy persone.

(*The Wyf of Bathes Tale*, vol. ii. p. 241.)

For if þe name of gentilesse be referred to renoun and clernesse of
linage. þan is gentil name but a foreine þing.

(*Chaucer's Boethius*, p. 78.)

Quæ [nobilitas], *si ad claritudinem refertur, aliena est.*

(*Boethius*, lib. iii. pr. 6.)

VII. NERO'S CRUELTY.

No teer out of his eyen for that sighte
Ne cam; but sayde, a fair womman was sche.
Gret wonder is how that he couthe or mighte
Be domesman on hir dede beauté.

(*The Monkes Tule*, vol. iii. p. 217.)

Ne no tere ne wette his face, but he was so hard-herted þat he
myȝte ben domesman or iuge of hire dede beauté.

(*Chaucer's Boethius*, p. 55.)

Ora non tinxit lacrymis, sed esse
Censor extincti potuit decoris.

(*Boethius*, lib. ii. met. 6.)

VIII. PREDESTINATION AND FREE-WILL.

In 'Troylus and Cryseyde' we find the following long passage
taken from Boethius, book v. prose 2, 3.

Book iv. st. 134, vol. iv. p. 339.

- (1) Syn God seth every thyng, out of doutaunce,
And hem disponeth, thorough his ordinaunce,

In hire merites sothely for to be,
As they shul comen by predesteyné

136

- (2) For som men seyn if God seth al byforne,
Ne God may not deseyved ben pardé !
Than moot it fallen, theigh men hadde it sworne,
That purveyaunce hath seyn befor to be ,
Wherfor I seye, that, from eterne, if he
Hathe wiste byforn our thought ek as oure dede,
We have no fre choys, as thise clerkes rede.

137

- (3) For other thoughte, nor other dede also,
Myghte nevere ben, but swich as purveyaunce,
Which may nat ben deceyved nevere moo,
Hath feled byforne, withouten ignoraunce ;
For if ther myghte ben a variaunce,
To wrythen out fro Goddes purveyinge,
Ther nere no prescience of thyng comynge ;

138

- (4) But it were rather an opinyon
Uncertein, and no stedfast forseyng ;
And certes that were an abusyon
That God shold han no parfit clere wetyng,
More than we men, that han douteous wenyng,
But swich an erroure upon God to gesse
Were fals, and foule, and wikked corsednesse.

139

- (5) They seyn right thus, that thyng is nat to come,
For that the prescience hath seyne byfore
That it shal come ; but they seyn that therfore
That it shal come, therfor the purveyaunce
Woot it bifore, withouten ignorance.

140

- (6) And in this manere this necessité
Retourneth in his part contrarye agayn ;
For nedfully byhoveth it not to be,
That thilke thynges fallen in certeyn
That ben purveyed ; but nedly, as they seyne,
Bihoveth it that thynges, which that falle,
That thei in certein ben purveied alle.

141

- (7) I mene as though I labourede me in this,
To enqueren which thyng cause of whiche thyng be ;
- (8) As, whether that the prescience of God is
The certain cause of the necessité
Of thynges that to comen ben, pardé !
Or, if necessité of thyng comynge
Be cause certain of the purveyinge.

142

- (9) But now nenforce I me nat in shewynge
How the ordre of causes stant ; but wel woot I
That it bihoveth that the bifallynge
Of thynges, wiste bifor certainly,
Be necessarie, al seme it nat therby
That prescience put fallynge necessaire
To thyng to come, al falle it foule or faire.

143

- (10) For, if ther sit a man yonde on a see, [seat]
Than by necessité bihoveth it,
That certes thyn opinioun soth be,
That wenest or coniectest that he sit ;
And, further over, now ayeinwarde yit,
Lo right so is it on the part contrarie,
As thus,—nowe herkene, for I wol nat tarie :—

144

- (11) I-sey, that if the opinion of the
Be soth for that he sit, than seye I this,
That he moot sitten by necessité ;
And thus necessité in either is,
For in hym nede of sittynge is, ywis,
And in the, nede of soth ; and thus forsoth
Ther mot necessité ben in yow bothe.

145

- (12) But thow maist seyne, the man sit nat therfore,
That thyn opinioun of his sittynge sothe is ;
But rather, for the man sat there byfore,
Therfor is thyn opinioun soth, ywys ;
And I seye, though the cause of soth of this
Cometh of his sittynge, yet necessité
Is interchaunged both in hym and the.

146

- (13) Thus in the same wyse, out of dountaunce,
I may wel maken, as it semeth me,
My resonynge of Goddes purveiaunce,
And of the thynges that to comen be; . . .

147

- (14) For although that for thyng shal come, ywys,
Therfor it is purveyed certeynly,
Nat that it cometh for it purveied is ;
Yet, natheles, bihoveth it nedfully,
That thyng to come be purveied trewly ;
Or elles thynges that purveied be,
That they bitiden by necessité.

148

- (15) And this sufficeth right ynough, certeyn,
For to distruye oure fre choys everydele.

(1) Quæ tamen ille ab æterno cuncta prospiciens providentiæ cernit intuitus, et suis quæque meritis prædestinata disponit. . . . (*Boethius*, lib. v. pr. 2.) . . .

(2) Nam si cuncta prospicit Deus neque falli ullo modo potest, evenire necesse est, quod providentia futurum esse præviderit. Quare si ab æterno non facta hominum modo, sed etiam consilia voluntatesque prænoscit, nulla erit arbitrii libertas ;

(3) Neque enim vel factum aliud ullum vel quælibet existere poterit voluntas, nisi quam necia falli providentia divina præsenserit. Nam si res aliorum, quam provise sunt detorqueri valent, non jam erit futuri firma præscientia ;

(4) Sed opinio potius incerta ; quod de Deo nefas credere judico.

(5) Aiunt enim non ideo quid esse eventurum quoniam id providentia futurum esse prospexerit ; sed e contrario potius, quoniam quid futurum est, id divinam providentiam latere non possit.

(6) Eoque modo necessarium est hoc in contrariam relabi partem ; neque enim necesse est contingere quæ providentur, sed necesse est quæ futura sunt provideri.

(7) Quasi vero quæ cuiusque rei causa sit,

(8) Præscientiæ futurorum necessitatis an futurorum necessitas providentiæ, laboretur.

(9) At nos illud demonstrare nitamur, quoquo modo sese habeat ordo causarum, necessarium esse eventum præcitarum rerum, etiam si præscientia futuris rebus eveniendi necessitatem non videatur inferre.

(10) Etenim si quispiam sedeat, opinionem quæ eum sedere conjectat veram esse necesse est : at e converso rursus,

(11) Si de quopiam vera sit opinio quoniam sedet eum sedere necesse est. In utroque igitur necessitas inest : in hoc quidem sedendi, at vero in altero veritatis.

(12) Sed non idcirco quisque sedet, quoniam vera est opinio : sed hæc potius vera est, quoniam quempiam sedere præcessit. Ita cum causa veritatis ex altera parte procedat, inest tamen communis in utraque necessitas.

(13) Similia de providentia futurisque rebus ratiocinari patet.

(14) Nam etiam si idcirco, quoniam futura sunt, providentur : non vero ideo, quoniam providentur, eveniunt : nihilo minus tamen a Deo vel ventura provideri, vel provisa evenire necesse est :

(15) Quod ad perimendam arbitrii libertatem solum satis est.

(lib. v. pr. 3.)

See *Chaucer's Boethius*, pp. 154-6.

IX. THE GRIEF OF REMEMBERING BYGONE HAPPINESS.

For, of fortunes scharp adversité,
The worste kynde of infortune is this,
A man to han ben in prosperité,
And it remembren, when it passed is.

(*Troilus and Cryseyde*, bk. iii. st. 226, vol. iv. p. 291.)

Sed hoc est, quod recolentem me vehementius coquit. Nam in omni adversitate fortunæ infelicissimum genus est infortunii, fuisse felicem.¹—
(*Boethius*, lib. ii. pr. 4.)

X. VULTURES TEAR THE STOMACH OF TITYUS IN HELL.

———Syciphus in Helle,
Whos stomak fowles tyren everemo,
That hyghten volturia.

(*Troilus and Cryseyde*, book i. st. 113, p. 140.)

þe fowel þat hyȝt volor þat etip þe stomak or þe giser of ticius.

(*Chaucer's Boethius*, p. 107.)

XI. THE MUTABILITY OF FORTUNE.

For if hire (Fortune's) whiel stynte any thinge to torne
Thanne cessed she Fortune anon to be.

(*Troilus and Cryseyde*, bk. i. st. 122, p. 142.)

If fortune bygan to dwelle stable. she cessed[e] þan to ben fortune.

(*Chaucer's Boethius*, p. 32.)

¹ Cf. Dante, *Inferno*, V. 121.

Nessun maggior dolore
Che ricordarsi del tempo felice
Nella miseria; e ciò sa 'l tuo Dottore.

(Compare stanzas 120, 121, p. 142, and stanza 136, p. 146, of 'Troilus and Cryseyde' with pp. 31, 33, 35, and p. 34 of Chaucer's Boethius.)

At omnium mortalium stolidissime, si manere incipit, fors esse desistit.—(*Boethius*, lib. ii. prose 1.)

XII. WORLDLY SELYNESSE

Imedled is with many a bitternesse.
 Ful angwyshous than is, God woote, quod she,
 Condicion of veyn prosperité!
 For oither joies comen nought yfeere,
 Or elles no wight hath hem alwey here.

(*Troilus and Cryseyde*, bk. iii. st. 110, p. 258.)

þe swetnesse of mannes welefulnesse is yspranid wiþ many[e] bitter-
 nesses.—(*Chaucer's Boethius*, p. 42.)

—ful anguisous þing is þe condicioun of mans goodes. For
 eyþer it cometh al to-gidre to a wyȝt. or ellys it lasteth not perpetuely.
 (*Ib.* p. 41.)

Quam multis amaritudinibus humanæ felicitatis dulcedo respersa
 est!—(*Boethius*, lib. ii. prose 4.)

Anxia enim res est humanorum conditio bonorum, et quæ vel nun-
 quam tota proveniat, vel nunquam perpetua subsistat.—(*Ib.*)

O, brotel wele of mannes joie unstable!
 With what wight so thou be, or how thou pleye,
 Oither he woot that thou joie art muable,
 Or woot it nought, it mot ben on of tweyen:
 Now if he woot it not, how may he seyen
 That he hath veray joie and selynesse,
 That is of ignoraunce ay in distresse?

Now if he woote that joie is transitorie,
 As every joie of worldly thyng mot fle,
 Thanne every tyme he that hath in memorie,
 The drede of lesyng maketh hym that he
 May in no parfyte selynesse be:
 And if to lese his joie, he sette not a myte,
 Than semeth it, that joie is worth ful lite.

(*Troilus and Cryseyde*, bk. iii. st. 111, 112, vol. iv. p. 258.)

(1) What man þat þis tounblyng welefulnesse leediþ, eiþer he woot
 þat [it] is chaungeable. or ellis he woot it nat. And yif he woot it
 not. what blisful fortune may þer be in þe blyndenesse of ignoraunce.

(2) And yif he woot þat it is chaungeable. he mot alwey ben adrad
 þat he ne lese þat þing. þat he ne douteþ nat but þat he may leesen it.

. For whiche þe continuel drede þat he haþ ne suffriþ hym nat to ben weleful. Or ellys yif he leese it he wene[þ] to be dispised and forleten hit. Certis eke þat is a ful lytel goode þat is born wiþ euene hert[e] whan it is loost.—(*Chaucer's Boethius*, pp. 43, 44.)

(1) Quem caduca ista felicitas vehit, vel scit eam, vel nescit esse mutabilem. Si nescit, quænam beata sors esse potest ignorantie in cæcitate?

(2) Si scit, metuat necesse est, ne amittat, quod amitti posse non dubitat; quare continuus timor non sinit esse felicem. An vel si amisserit, negligendum putat? Sic quoque perexile bonum est, quod æquo animo feratur amissum.—(*Boethius*, lib. ii. prose 4.)

XIII. FORTUNE.

——— Fortune

That semeth trewest when she wol bigyle,

And, when a wight is from hire whiel ithrowe,
Than laugheth she, and maketh hym the mowe.

(*Troilus and Cryseyde*, bk. iii. st. 254, vol. iv. p. 299.)

She (Fortune) vseþ ful flatryng familiarité wiþ hem þat she enforceþ to bygyle.—(*Chaucer's Boethius*, p. 30.)

. She lauþeþ and scornþ þe wepyng of hem þe whiche she haþ makid wepe wiþ hir free wille Yif þat a wyzt is seyn weleful and ouerþrowe in an houre.—(*Ib.* p. 33.)

In book v., stanza 260, vol. v. p. 75, Chaucer describes how the soul of Hector, after his death, ascended 'up to the holughnesse of the seventhe spere.' In so doing he seems to have had before him met. 1, book 4, of *Boethius*, where the 'soul' is described as passing into the heaven's utmost sphere, and looking down on the world below. See *Chaucer's Boethius*, p. 110, 111.

Ætas Prima is of course a metrical version of lib. ii. met. 5.

Hampole speaks of the wonderful sight of the Lynx; perhaps he was indebted to *Boethius* for the hint.—(See *Boethius*, book 3, pr. 8, p. 81.)

I have seen the following elsewhere:

(1) Value not beauty, for it may be destroyed by a three days' fever.
(See *Chaucer's Boethius*, p. 81.)

(2) There is no greater plague than the enmity of thy familiar friend.
(See *Chaucer's translation*, p. 77.)

Chaucer did not English Boethius second-hand, through any early French version, as some have supposed, but made his translation with the Latin original before him.

Jean de Méung's version, the only early French translation, perhaps, accessible to Chaucer, is not always literal, while the present translation is seldom free or periphrastic, but conforms closely to the Latin, and is at times awkwardly literal. A few passages, taken haphazard, will make this sufficiently clear.

Et dolor ætatem jussit inesse suam. And sorow haþ comaunded his age to be in me (p. 4).

Et ma douleur commanda a vieillesse
Entrer en moy / ains quen fust hors ieunesse.

*Mors hominum felix, quæ se nec dulcibus annis
Inserit, et mæstis sæpe vocata venit.*

þilke deef of men is welful þat ne comeþ not in 3eres þat ben swete (i. *mirie*). but comeþ to wrecches often yclepid. (p. 4.)

On dit la mort des homes estre eureuse
Qui ne vient pas en saison plantureuse
Mais des tristes moult souuent appelee
Elle y affuit nue / seche et pelee.

Querimoniam lacrymabilem. Wepli compleynte (p. 5). Fr. ma complainte moy esmouuant a pleurs.

Styli officio. Wiþ office of poyntel (p. 5). Fr. (que ie reduisse) par escript.

Inexhaustus. Swiche . . . þat it ne my3t[e] not be emptid (p. 5). Fr. inconsumptible.

Scenicas meretriculas. Comune strumpetis of siche a place þat men clepen þe theatre (p. 6). Fr. ces ribaudelles fardees.

Præcipiti profundo. In ouer-þrowyng depnesse (p. 7).

[L]As que la pensee de lomme
Est troublee et plongie comme
En abisme precipitee
Sa propre lumiere gastee.

Nec peruetusta nec incelebris. Neyþer ouer-oalde ne vnsolempne (p. 11). Fr. desquelz la memoire nest pas trop ancienne ou non recitee.

Inter secreta otia. Among my secre restyng whiles (p. 14). Fr. entre mes secrettes et oyseuses estudes.

Palatini canes. þe houndys of þe palays (p. 15). Fr. les chiens du palais.

Masculæ prolis. Of þi masculyn children (p. 37). Fr. de ta lignie masculine.

Ad singularem felicitatis tuæ cumulum venire delectat. It deliteþ me to comen now to þe singuler vphepyng of þi welesfulnesse (p. 37). Fr. Il me plait venir au singulier monceau de ta felicite.

Consulare imperium. Emperie of consulers (p. 51). Fr. lempire consulaire.

Hoc ipsum brevis habitaculi. Of þilke litel habitacle (p. 57). Fr. de cest trespetit habitacle.

Late patentes plagas. þe brode shewyng contreys (p. 60).

QViconques tend a gloire vaine

Et le croit estre souueraine

Voye les regions patentes

Du ciel

Ludens hominum cura. þe pleiyng besines of men (p. 68).

Si quil tollist par doulz estude

Des hommes la solicitude . . .

Hausi cælum. I took heuene (p. 10). Fr. ie . . . regarday le ciel.

Certamen aduersum præfectum prætorii communis commodi ratione suscepi. I took strif azeins þe prouost of þe pretorie for comune profit (p. 15). Fr. ie entrepris lestrif a lencontre du prefect du parlement royal a cause de la commune vtilite.

At cuius criminis arguimur summam quæris? But axest þou in somme of what gilt I am accused? (p. 17). Fr. Mais demandes tu la somme du pechie duquel pechie nous sommes arguez?

Fortuita temeritate. By fortunouse fortune (p. 26). Fr. par fortuite folie.

Quos premunt septem gelidi triones. Alle þe peoples þat ben vndir þe colde sterres þat hyzten þe seuene triones (p. 55). Fr. ceulx de septentrion.

Ita ego quoque tibi veluti corollarium dabo. Ryzt so wil I ȝene þe here as a corolarie or a mede of coroune (p. 91). Fr. semblablement ie te donneray ainsi que vng correlaire.

In stadio. In þe stadie or in þe forlonge (p. 119). Fr. ou (for au) champ.

Conjecto. I coniecte (p. 154). Fr. ie coniecture.

Nimum . . . aduersari ac repugnare videtur. It semeþ . . . to repugnien and to contrarien gretly. Fr. Ce semble chose trop contraire et repugnante.

Universitatis ambitum. Envirounynge of þe vniuersite (p. 165). Fr. lauironnement de luniuersalite.

Rationis universum. Vniuersite of resoun (p. 165). Fr. luniuersalite de Raison.

Scientiam nunquam deficientis instantie rectius aestimabis. þou shalt demen [it] more ryztfully þat it is science of preesence or of instaunce þat neuer ne fayleþ (p. 174). Fr. mais tu la diras plus droittement et mieulx science de instante presentialite non iamais defaillant mais eternelle.

Many of the above examples are very bald renderings of the original, and are only quoted here to show that Chaucer did not make his translation from the French.

Chaucer is not always felicitous in his translations:—thus he translates *clavus atque gubernaculum* by *keye* and a *stiere* (p. 103), and *compendium* (gain, acquisition) by *abreggyng*e (abridging, curtailment), p. 151. Many terms make their appearance in English for the first time,—and most of them have become naturalized, and are such as we could ill spare. Some few are rather uncommon, as *gouvernaile* (gubernaculum), p. 27; *arbitre* (arbitrium), p. 154. As Chaucer takes the trouble to explain *inestimable* (inestimabilis), p. 158, it could not have been a very familiar term.

Our translator evidently took note of various readings, for on p. 31 he notes a variation of the original. On p. 51 he uses *armurers* (= armures) to render *arma*, though most copies agree in reading *arva*.

There are numerous glosses and explanations of particular passages, which seem to be interpolated by Chaucer himself. Thus he explains what is meant by the *heritage of Socrates* (p. 10, 11); he gives the meaning of *coemption* (p. 15); of *Euripus* (p. 33); of the *porch* (p. 166).¹ Some of his definitions are very quaint; as, for instance, that of Tragedy—‘*a dite of a prosperite for a tyme þat endiþ in wrechednesse*’ (p. 35). One would think that the following definition of Tragedian would be rather superfluous after this,—‘*a maker of dites þat hyzten (are called) tregedies*’ (p. 77).

Mellistui . . . oris Homerus

is thus quaintly Englished: *Homer wiþ þe hony mouþe, þat is to seyn. homer wiþ þe swete dites* (p. 153).

¹ See pages 39, 50, 61, 94, 111, 133, 149, 153, 159.

The present translation of the *De Consolatione* is taken from Additional MS. 10,340, which is supposed to be the *oldest* manuscript that exists in our public libraries. After it was all copied out and ready for press, Mr Bradshaw was kind enough to procure me, for the purpose of collation, the loan of the Camb. University MS. Ii. 3. 21, from which the various readings at the foot of the pages are taken.

Had I had an opportunity of examining the Cambridge MS. carefully throughout before the work was so far advanced, I should certainly have selected it in preference to the text now given to the reader. Though not so ancient as the British Museum MS., it is far more correct in its grammatical inflexions, and is no doubt a copy of an older and very accurate text.

The Additional MS. is written by a scribe who was unacquainted with the force of the final *-e*. Thus he adds it to the preterites of strong verbs, which do not require it; he omits it in the preterites of weak verbs where it is wanted, and attaches it to passive participles (of weak verbs), where it is superfluous. The scribe of the Cambridge MS. is careful to preserve the final *-e* where it is a sign (1) of the definite declension of the adjective; (2) of the plural adjective; (3) of the infinitive mood; (4) of the preterite of weak verbs; (5) of present participles;¹ (6) of the 2nd pers. pret. indic. of strong verbs; (7) of adverbs; (8) of an older vowel ending.

The Addit. MS. has frequently *thilk* (singular and plural), and *-nes* (in *wrechednes*, &c.), when the Camb. MS. has *thilke*² and *-nesse*.

For further differences the reader may consult the numerous collations at the foot of the page.

If the Chaucer Society obtains that amount of patronage from the literary public which it deserves, but unfortunately has yet not succeeded in getting, so that it may be enabled to go on with the great work which has been so successfully commenced, then the time may come when I shall have the opportunity of editing the Camb. MS. of Chaucer's *Boethius* for that Society, and lovers of Early English Literature will have two texts instead of one.

¹ In the *Canterbury Tales* we find participles in *-yngel*.

² It is nearly always *thilke* in the *Canterbury Tales*.

APPENDIX TO INTRODUCTION.

THE last of the ancients, and one who forms a link between the classical period of literature and that of the middle ages, in which he was a favourite author, is Boethius, a man of fine genius, and interesting both from his character and his death. It is well known that after filling the dignities of Consul and Senator in the court of Theodoric, he fell a victim to the jealousy of a sovereign, from whose memory, in many respects glorious, the stain of that blood has never been effaced. The *Consolation of Philosophy*, the chief work of Boethius, was written in his prison. Few books are more striking from the circumstances of their production. Last of the classic writers, in style not impure, though displaying too lavishly that poetic exuberance which had distinguished the two or three preceding centuries, in elevation of sentiment equal to any of the philosophers, and mingling a Christian sanctity with their lessons, he speaks from his prison in the swan-like tones of dying eloquence. The philosophy that consoled him in bonds, was soon required in the sufferings of a cruel death. Quenched in his blood, the lamp he had trimmed with a skilful hand gave no more light ; the language of Tully and Virgil soon ceased to be spoken ; and many ages were to pass away, before learned diligence restored its purity, and the union of genius with imitation taught a few modern writers to surpass in eloquence the Latinity of Boethius.—(Hallam's *Literature of Europe*, i. 2, 4th ed. 1854.)

The Senator Boethius is the last of the Romans whom Cato or Tully could have acknowledged for their countryman. As a wealthy orphan, he inherited the patrimony and honours of the Anician family, a name ambitiously assumed by the kings and emperors of the age ; and the appellation of Manlius asserted his genuine or fabulous descent from a race of consuls and dictators, who had repulsed the Gauls from the Capitol, and sacrificed their sons to the discipline of the Republic. In the youth of Boethius the studies of Rome were not totally abandoned ; a Virgil is now extant, corrected by the hand of a consul ; and the professors of grammar, rhetoric, and jurisprudence, were maintained in their privileges and pensions by the liberality of the Goths. But the erudition of the Latin language was insufficient to satiate his ardent curiosity ; and

Boethius is said to have employed eighteen laborious years in the schools of Athens, which were supported by the zeal, the learning, and the diligence of Proclus and his disciples. The reason and piety of their Roman pupil were fortunately saved from the contagion of mystery and magic, which polluted the groves of the Academy, but he imbibed the spirit, and imitated the method, of his dead and living masters, who attempted to reconcile the strong and subtle sense of Aristotle with the devout contemplation and sublime fancy of Plato. After his return to Rome, and his marriage with the daughter of his friend, the patrician Symmachus, Boethius still continued, in a palace of ivory and [glass] to prosecute the same studies. The Church was edified by his profound defence of the orthodox creed against the Arian, the Eutychian, and the Nestorian heresies; and the Catholic unity was explained or exposed in a formal treatise by the *indifference* of three distinct though consubstantial persons. For the benefit of his Latin readers, his genius submitted to teach the first elements of the arts and sciences of Greece. The geometry of Euclid, the music of Pythagoras, the arithmetic of Nicomachus, the mechanics of Archimedes, the astronomy of Ptolemy, the theology of Plato, and the logic of Aristotle, with the commentary of Porphyry, were translated and illustrated by the indefatigable pen of the Roman senator. And he alone was esteemed capable of describing the wonders of art, a sun-dial, a water-clock, or a sphere which represented the motions of the planets. From these abstruse speculations, Boethius stooped, or, to speak more truly, he rose to the social duties of public and private life: the indigent were relieved by his liberality; and his eloquence, which flattery might compare to the voice of Demosthenes or Cicero, was uniformly exerted in the cause of innocence and humanity. Such conspicuous merit was felt and rewarded by a discerning prince: the dignity of Boethius was adorned with the titles of consul and patrician, and his talents were usefully employed in the important station of master of the offices. Notwithstanding the equal claims of the East and West, his two sons were created, in their tender youth, the consuls of the same year. On the memorable day of their inauguration, they proceeded in solemn pomp from their palace to the forum amidst the applause of the senate and people; and their joyful father, the true Consul of Rome, after pronouncing an oration in the praise of his royal benefactor, distributed a triumphal largess in the games of the circus. Prosperous in his fame and fortunes, in his public honours and private alliances, in the cultivation of science and the consciousness of virtue, Boethius might have been styled happy, if that precarious epithet could be safely applied before the last term of the life of man.

A philosopher, liberal of his wealth and parsimonious of his time, might be insensible to the common allurements of ambition, the thirst of gold and employment. And some credit may be due to the asseveration of Boethius, that he had reluctantly obeyed the divine Plato, who enjoins every virtuous citizen to rescue the state from the usurpation of vice and ignorance. For the integrity of his public conduct he appeals to the

memory of his country. His authority had restrained the pride and oppression of the royal officers, and his eloquence had delivered Paulianus from the dogs of the palace. He had always pitied, and often relieved, the distress of the provincials, whose fortunes were exhausted by public and private rapine; and Boethius alone had courage to oppose the tyranny of the Barbarians, elated by conquest, excited by avarice, and, as he complains, encouraged by impunity. In these honourable contests his spirit soared above the consideration of danger, and perhaps of prudence; and we may learn from the example of Cato, that a character of pure and inflexible virtue is the most apt to be misled by prejudice, to be heated by enthusiasm, and to confound private enmities with public justice. The disciple of Plato might exaggerate the infirmities of nature, and the imperfections of society; and the mildest form of a Gothic kingdom, even the weight of allegiance and gratitude, must be insupportable to the free spirit of a Roman patriot. But the favour and fidelity of Boethius declined in just proportion with the public happiness; and an unworthy colleague was imposed to divide and control the power of the master of the offices. In the last gloomy season of Theodoric, he indignantly felt that he was a slave; but as his master had only power over his life, he stood without arms and without fear against the face of an angry Barbarian, who had been provoked to believe that the safety of the senate was incompatible with his own. The Senator Albinus was accused and already convicted on the presumption of *hoping*, as it was said, the liberty of Rome.

"If Albinus be criminal," exclaimed the orator, "the senate and myself are all guilty of the same crime. If we are innocent, Albinus is equally entitled to the protection of the laws." These laws might not have punished the simple and barren wish of an unattainable blessing; but they would have shown less indulgence to the rash confession of Boethius, that, had he known of a conspiracy, the tyrant never should. The advocate of Albinus was soon involved in the danger and perhaps the guilt of his client; their signature (which they denied as a forgery) was affixed to the original address, inviting the emperor to deliver Italy from the Goths; and three witnesses of honourable rank, perhaps of infamous reputation, attested the treasonable designs of the Roman patrician. Yet his innocence must be presumed, since he was deprived by Theodoric of the means of justification, and rigorously confined in the tower of Pavia, while the senate, at the distance of five hundred miles, pronounced a sentence of confiscation and death against the most illustrious of its members. At the command of the Barbarians, the occult science of a philosopher was stigmatized with the names of sacrilege and magic. A devout and dutiful attachment to the senate was condemned as criminal by the trembling voices of the senators themselves; and their ingratitude deserved the wish or prediction of Boethius, that, after him, none should be found guilty of the same offence.

While Boethius, oppressed with fetters, expected each moment the sentence or the stroke of death, he composed in the tower of Pavia the

Consolation of Philosophy ; a golden volume not unworthy of the leisure of Plato or Tully, but which claims incomparable merit from the barbarism of the times and the situation of the author. The celestial guide, whom he had so long invoked at Rome and Athens, now condescended to illumine his dungeon, to revive his courage, and to pour into his wounds her salutary balm. She taught him to compare his long prosperity and his recent distress, and to conceive new hopes from the inconstancy of fortune. Reason had informed him of the precarious condition of her gifts ; experience had satisfied him of their real value ; he had enjoyed them without guilt ; he might resign them without a sigh, and calmly disdain the impotent malice of his enemies, who had left him happiness, since they had left him virtue. From the earth, Boethius ascended to heaven in search of the SUPREME GOOD ; explored the metaphysical labyrinth of chance and destiny, of prescience and free-will, of time and eternity ; and generously attempted to reconcile the perfect attributes of the Deity with the apparent disorders of his moral and physical government. Such topics of consolation, so obvious, so vague, or so abstruse, are ineffectual to subdue the feelings of human nature. Yet the sense of misfortune may be diverted by the labour of thought ; and the sage who could artfully combine in the same work the various riches of philosophy, poetry, and eloquence, must already have possessed the intrepid calmness which he affected to seek. Suspense, the worst of evils, was at length determined by the ministers of death, who executed, and perhaps exceeded, the inhuman mandate of Theodoric. A strong cord was fastened round the head of Boethius, and forcibly tightened till his eyes almost started from their sockets ; and some mercy may be discovered in the milder torture of beating him with clubs till he expired. But his genius survived to diffuse a ray of knowledge over the darkest ages of the Latin world ; the writings of the philosopher were translated by the most glorious of the English kings, and the third emperor of the name of Otho removed to a more honourable tomb the bones of a Catholic saint, who, from his Arian persecutors, had acquired the honours of martyrdom and the fame of miracles. In the last hours of Boethius, he derived some comfort from the safety of his two sons, of his wife, and of his father-in-law, the venerable Symmachus. But the grief of Symmachus was indiscreet, and perhaps disrespectful ; he had presumed to lament, he might dare to revenge, the death of an injured friend. He was dragged in chains from Rome to the palace of Ravenna ; and the suspicions of Theodoric could only be appeased by the blood of an innocent and aged senator.—Gibbon's *Decline and Fall*, 1838, vol. vii. p. 45—52 (without the notes).

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LIBER PRIMUS.

[*fol. 3.*]

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- 2 Hic dum mecum tacitus.
- 3 Heu quam precipiti.
- 4 Set medicine inquit tempus.
- 5 Tunc me discussa.
- 6 Haut ¹ aliter tristicie. ¹ MS. hanc.
- 7 Quisquis composito.
- 8 Sentis ne inquit.
- 9 O stelliferi conditor orbis.
- 10 Hic ubi continuato dolore.
- 11 Cum phebi radijs.
- 12 Primum igitur pateris rogacionibus.
- 13 Nubibus atris condita.

EXPLICIT LIBER PRIMUS.

LIBER SECUNDUS.

- 1 Postea paulisper ² conticuit. ² MS. Ulper.
- 2 Hec cum superba.
- 3 Uellem autem pauca.
- 4 Si quantas rapidis.
- 5 His igitur si *et* pro se.

- 6 Cum primo polo.
- 7 Tunc ego uera inquam.
- 8 Contraque.
- 9 Quisquis ualet perhennem cantus.
- 10 Set cum rationum iam in te.
- 11 Felix in mirum iam prior etas.
- 12 Quid autem de dignitatibus.
- 13 Nouimus quantos dederat.
- 14 Tum ego scis inquam.
- 15 Quicunque solam mente.
- 16 Set ne me inexorabile.
- 17 Quod mundus stabile fide.

EXPLICIT LIBER SECUNDUS.

LIBER TERCIVS.

- 1 Iam tantum illa.
- 2 Qui serere ingenium.
- 3 Tunc defixo paululum.
- 4 Quantas rerum flectat.
- 5 Uos quoque terrena animalia.
- 6 Quamuis fluenter diues.
- 7 Set dignitatibus.
- 8 Quamuis se tirio.
- 9 An uero regna.
- 10 Qui se ualet esse potentem.
- 11 Gloria uero quam fallax.
- 12 Omne hominum genus in terris.
- 13 Quid autem de corporibus.
- 14 Habet hoc uoluptas.
- 15 Nichil igitur dubium est.
- 16 Heu que miseros tramite.
- 17 Hactenus mendacio formam.
- 18 O qui perpetua.
- 19 Quoniam igitur qui scit.
- 20 Nunc omnes pariter.
- 21 Assencior inquam cuncta.

- 22 *Quisque profunda.*
- 23 *Tunc ego platoni inquam.*
- 24 *Felix qui poterit.*

EXPLICIT LIBER TERTIUS.

LIBER QUARTUS.

- 1 *Hec cum philosophia.*
- 2 *Sunt etenim penne.*
- 3 *Tunc ego pape inquam.*
- 4 *Quos uides sedere celsos.*
- 5 *Uides ne igitur quanto.*
- 6 *U[e]la naricij ducis.*
- 7 *Tunc ego fateor inquam.*
- 8 *Quid tantos iunat.*
- 9 *Huic ego uideo inquam.*
- 10 *Si quis arcturi¹ sydera.* ¹ MS. arituri.
- 11 *Ita est inquam.*
- 12 *Si uis celsi iura.*
- 13 *Iam ne igitur uides.*
- 14 *Bella bis quinis.*

EXPLICIT LIBER QUARTUS.

INCIPIIT LIBER QUINTUS.

- 1 *Dixerat oracionis que cursum.*
- 2 *Rupis achemenie.*
- 3 *Animaduerto inquam.*
- 4 *Puro clarum lumine.*
- 5 *Tamen ego en inquam.*
- 6 *Que nam discors.*
- 7 *Tamen illa uetus.*
- 8 *Quondam porticus attulit.*
- 9 *Quod si in corporibus.*
- 10 *Quam uarijs figuris.*
- 11 *Quoniam igitur uti paulo antea.*

EXPLICIT LIBER QUINTUS ET ULTIMUS.

[* fol. 3 b.]

* LIBER PRIMUS.

[The fyrste
Metur.]

INCIPIIT LIBER BOICII DE CONSOLACIONE PHILOSOPHIE.

Carmina qui quondam studio florente peregi.

Boethius deplores
his misfortunes
in the following
pathetic elegy.

Alas I wepyng am constreined to bygynne vers of
sorouful matere. ¶ þat whilom in florysching
studie made delitable ditees. For loo rendyng muses

4 of poetes enditen to me þinges to be writen. and dreery
vers of wrecchednes weten my face wiþ verray teers.

¶ At þe leest no drede ne myȝt[e] ouer-come þo muses.

7 þat þei ne weren felawes and folweden my wey. þat is
to seyne when I was exiled. þei þat weren glorie of
my youȝth whilom weleful and grene conforten now þe
sorouful werdes of me olde man. for elde is comen vn-
warly vpon me hasted by þe harmes þat I haue. and

ypalage
antithesisLaments his
immature old
age.

12 sorow hap comaunded his age to be in me. ¶ Heeres
hore ben schad ouertymelyche vpon myne heued. and
þe slak[e] skyn trembleþ vpon myn emty body. þilk[e]
deef of men is welful þat ne comeþ not in ȝeres þat
ben swete (.i. mirie.) but comeþ to wrecches often
17 yclepid.

Death turns a
deaf ear to the
wretched.

¶ Allas allas wiþ how deaf an eere deep cruel
tourneþ away fro wrecches and naieþ to closen wep-
yng eyen. ¶ While fortune vnfeipful fauored[e] me
wiþ lyȝte goodes (.s. temporels.) þe sorouful houre þat
22 is to seyne þe deep had[de] almost dreynt myne heued.

When Fortune
was favourable
Death came near
Boethius.but in his
adversity life is
unpleasantly
protracted.

¶ But now for fortune cloudy hap chaunged hir dis-
ceyuable chere to me warde. myn vnpitouse lijf draweþ
a long vnagreable dwellynges in me. ¶ O ȝe my

- 1 of—MS. of of.
2 florysching—florysaynge
3 rendyng—rendyng
4 be—ben
5 wrecchednes—wrecched-
nesse
6 teers—teeres
7 leest—leeste
8 myȝt[e] ouer-come—myhte
ouercomen
9 seyne when—seyn whan
10 youȝth—MS. þoȝt. C. yowthe
11 sorouful werdes—sorful
wierdes [i. fata]
12 sorow—sorwe

- 13 hap—MS. hape
be—ben
14 hore—hoore
ben—arn
myn—myn
15 slak[e]—slake
emty—emptyd
þilk[e]—þilke
16 welful—weleful
comeþ not—comth nat
17 .i. mirie—omitted
18 tourneþ—torneth
naieþ—nayteth
wepyng—wepynges

- 20 While—Whil
fauored[e]—fauorede
21 lyȝte—lyhte
.s. temporels—omitted
sorouful houre—sorful
houre
22 seyne—seyn
had[de]—hadde
myn—myn
23 hap—MS. hape
chaunged hir disceyu-
able—chaungyd hyre de-
ceyuable
24 vnpitouse lijf—vnpitouse
lyf

frendes what or wherto anaunted[e] 3e me to be wel-
ful : for he þat hæp fallen stood not in stedfast degree.

Why did his
friends call
him happy ?
He stood not
firm that hath
thus fallen.

HIC DUM MECUM TACITUS.

IN þe mene while þat I stille recorded[e] þise þinges
wip my self. *and* markede my wepli compleynte wip

[The first
prose.] 29

office of poyntel. I saw stondyng aboue þe heyzt of my
heued a woman of ful greet reuerence by semblaunt

Philosophy
appears to
Boethius,

hir eyen brennyng *and* clere seing ouer þe comune
myzt of men. wip a lijfly colour *and* wip swiche vigoure

like a beautiful
woman,

and strenkeþ þat it ne myzt[e] not be emptid. ¶ Al

were it so þat sche was ful of so greet age. þat men ne

and of great age.

wolde not trowe in no manere þat sche were of oure

36

elde. þe stature of hir was of a doutous iugement. for

Her height could
not be determined,

sumtyme sche constreyned[e] *and* schronk hir seluen

lyche to þe comune mesure of men. *and* sumtyme it

semed[e] þat sche touched[e] þe heuene wip þe heyzte

40

of hir heued. *and* when sche hef hir heued heyer sche

for there were
times when she
raised her head
higher than the
heavens.

perced[e] þe selue heuene. so þat þe syzt of men lokyng

was in ydel. ¶ Hir cloþes weren makid of ryzt delye

þredes *and* subtil crafte of perdurable matere. þe wyche

44

cloþes sche hadde wouen wip hir owen hondes : as I

Her clothes were
finely wrought
and indissoluble,

knew wel aftir by hir selfe. declaryng *and* schewyng

to me þe beaute. þe wiche cloþes a derkenes of a for-

47

leten *and* dispised elde had[de] duskid *and* dirkid

but dark and
dusky, like old
be-smoked images.

it is wont to dirken by-smoked ymages. ¶ In þe ne-

26 anaunted[e]—anauntedo
be—ben
27 hæp—MS. hæpe
not—nat
stedfast—stidefast
28 In þe mene—omitted
recorded[e]—recordede
30 saw—MS. sawe, C. sawh
stondyng aboue—MS. ston-
dyng aboue, C. ston-
dyng abouen
heyzt—heyhte
my—myn
31 greet—gret
32 brennyng—brennyng
clere seing—clere seynge
33 swiche—swych
34 strenkeþ—strengthe
it — emptid — it myhte

nat ben emted
34 Al—alle
36 wolde—trowe—wolden
nat trowen
37 iugement—luggement
38 sumtyme—somytyme
constreyned[e] — con-
streynede
schronk — MS. schronke,
C. shronk
39 lyche—lyk
40 semed[e]—somedede
touched[e]—towchede
41 schen—whan
hef—MS. heued, C. hef
heyer—hyere
42 perced[e]—percode
syzt—syhte
lokyng—lookyng

44 crafte—craft
45 wouen—MS. wonnen, C.
wouen
ouen hondes — owne
handes
46 knew—MS. knewe, C.
knewh
selfe declaryng—self de-
claryng
schewyng—shewyng
47 derkenes—dirkenesse
forleten—forletyn
48 dispised—despised
had[de] duskid — hadde
duskid
dirkid—derked
49 by-smoked—the smokede
netherest[e]—netheresta

On the lower hem
of her garment
was the letter II
and on the
upper Θ.

Between the
letters were
steps like a
ladder.

Philosophy's
garments were
fattered and
torn, and pieces
had been carried
violently off.

In her right hand
she bore her
books, and in her
left a sceptre.

Philosophy bids
the Muses leave
Boethius,

[* fol. 4.]

as they only
increase his
sorrow with their
sweet venom.

They may
accustom the
mind to bear
grief, but cannot
free it from its
malady.

perest[e] hem or bordure of pese clopes men redder
ywouen in swiche a gregkysche .P. þat signifiek þe lijf
actif. And abouen þat lettre in þe heyrest[e] bordure
53 a grekysche T. þat signifiek þe lijf contemplatif.
¶ And by-twene þese two lettres þere weren seien de-
grees nobly wrouzt in manere of laddres. By wyche
56 degrees men myzt[en] clymbe fro þe nepemast[e] lettre
to þe ouermast[e]. ¶ Napeles hondes of sum men
hadde korue þat clope by vyolence and by strenkep.
¶ And eueryche man of hem hadde born away syche
60 peces as he myzte geet[e]. ¶ And forsoþe þis forsaide
woman ber bookes in hir ryzt honde. and in hir lefte
honde sche ber a ceptre. ¶ And when sche sauþ pese
poetical muses aprochen aboute my bedde. and endyt-
64 yng wordes to my wepynges. sche was a lytel ameu-
ed and glowed[e] wiþ cruel eyen. ¶ Who quod sche haþ
suffred aprochen to þis seek[e] man þise comune strum-
petis of siche a place þat *men clepen þe theatre.
68 ¶ þe wyche only ne asswagen not his sorowes. wiþ no
remedies. but þei wolde fede and norysche hem wiþ
swete venym. ¶ Forsoþe þise ben þo þat wiþ þornes
and prykkynges of talent; or affeccionus wiche þat
72 ben no þing fruteþyng nor profitable destroyen þe
cornes plenteouse of frutes of reson. ¶ For þei
holden þe hertes of men in usage. but þei ne delyuere
not folk fro maladye. but if ȝe muses hadde wiþdrawen

50 *pese*—thise
51 *swiche*—omitted
gregkysche—grekysche
signifiek—signifieth
52 *heyrest[e]*—heyste
54 *by-twene pese*—bytween
thise
þere—ther
seien—sein
55 *nobly wrouzt*—nobely y-
wrought
syche—whiche
56 *myzt[en]*—clymbe—myhten
clymbyn
nepemast[e]—nethereste
57 *ouermast[e]*—vppereste
sum—some
58 *hadde korue*—hadden
koruen

58 *clope*—cloth
strenkep—strengthe
59 *born*—MS. borne, C. born
away syche—away swiche
60 *geet[e]*—geten
forsaide—forseide
61 *ber*—MS. bere, C. bar
bookes—amale bookes
honde—hand
lefte honde—left hand
62 *ber*—MS. bere, C. baar
sawþ pese—say thise
63 *bedde*—bed
endityng—enditynge
64 *ameued*—amoued
65 *glowed[e]*—glowede
haþ—MS. haþe, C. hath
66 *seek[e]*—sike
þise—the

66 *strumpetis*—strompetes
67 *siche*—swich
clepen—clepyen
68 *only ne*—nat only ne
not his—nat hise
no—none
69 *wolde fede*—wolden feeden
norysche hem—norysya
hym
72 *ben*—ne ben
fruteþyng—fructefyng
73 *cornes plenteouse*—corn
plentyous
74 *þe and ne*—both omitted
75 *not*—nat
if ȝe—MS. if þe, C. yif ȝe
hadde—hadden

fro me wiþ þoure flateries. any vnkonnyng *and* vnprofit-
able man as men ben wont to fynde comunely amonges
þe peple. I wolde wene suffre þe lasse greuonsly.
¶ For-why in syche an vnprofitable man myne ententes
weren no þing endamaged. ¶ But 3e wiþdrawen me 80
þis man þat haþ ben norysched in studies or scoles of
Eleaticis *and* of achademicis in grece. ¶ But goþ now
raþer away 3e meremaydenes wyche ben swete til it
be at þe laste. *and* suffreþ þis man to be cured *and* 84
heled by myne muses. þat is to say by notful sciences.
¶ And þus þis compaygnie of muses I-blamed casten
wroþely þe chere adounward to þe erþe *and* schewyng 87
by redenesse hir schame þei passeden sorowfully þe
þreschefolde. ¶ And I of whom þe syzt ploned in
teres was derked so þat I ne myzt[e] not knowe what
þat woman was of so imperial auctorite. ¶ I wex al 91
a-besid *and* astoned. *and* caste my syzt adoune in to þe
erþe. *and* bygan stille forto abide what sche wolde don
afterwarde. ¶ þo come sche nere *and* sette hir down
vpon þe vterrest[e] corner of my bedde. *and* sche by- 95
holdyng my chere þat was cast to þe erþe heuy *and*
greuous of wepyng. compleinede wiþ þise wordes þat I
schal sey þe perturbacioun of my þouzt. 98

Philosophy is
deeply grieved,
because they have
not seduced one
of the profane,

but one who has
been brought up
in Eleatic and
Academic studies.

She bids the
syrens begone.

Blushing for
shame they pass
the threshold.

Boethius is
astonished at the
presence of the
august dame.

Philosophy
expresses her
concern for
Boethius.

HEU QUAM PRECIPITI MERSA PROFUNDO.

Allas how þe þouzt of man dreint in ouer þrowyng [The 2de Metur.]
depnesse dulleþ *and* forletip hys propre clere-
nesse. myntyng to gone in to foreyne derknesses: as
ofte as hys anioius bisines wexip wiþ-ouen mesure.

Drowned in
the depth of cares
the mind loses
its proper
clearness.

76 *vnkonnyng*—vnkunnynge
78 *peple*—poeppe
79 *syche*—swiche
myne—myn
80 *weren*—ne weeren
3e—ye
81 *haþ*—MS. hape, C. hath
ben—be
scoles—schooles
83 *goþ*—MS. goþe, C. goth
83 *wyche*—whiche þat
85 *sey*—seyn
86 *notful*—notful

86 *I-blamed*—Iblamyd
87 *wroþely*—wrothly
adounward—downward
88 *redenesse*—rednesse
sorowfully—sorrowfully
89 *þreschefolde*—threshold
syzt—syhte
90 *derked*—dyrked
myzt[e]—knows—myhte
nat—known
91 *wex*—wax
93 *a-besid*—abaysahed
caste—cast

93 *adouns in to*—down to
93 *don*—MS. done
95 *terrest[e] corner*—vt-
tereste corners
bedde—bed
97 *compleinede*—com-
pleyn[e]
98 *sey*—seyn
101 *gone*—goon
102 *bisines*—bykynnesse
ouen—owte

Man in his
freedom knew
each region of
the sky,

105 *pat is dryuen to and fro wiþ worldly wyndes. ¶ þis
man pat sumtyme was fre to whom þe heuene was open
and knowen and was wont to gone in heuenelyche
papes. and sauþ þe lyztnesse of þe rede sunne. and sauþ
þe sterres of þe colde moone. and wyche sterre in
heuene vseþ wandryng risorses yflit by dyuerse speres.*

the motions of
the planets, and
was wont to
investigate the
causes of storms,

¶ þis man ouer comere hadde *comprehendid* al þis by
noubre. of accountyng in astronomye. ¶ And ouer
þis he was wont to seche þe causes whennes þe soun-

112 *yng wyndes moeuen and bisien þe smope water of þe
see. and what spirit turneþ þe stable heuene. and
whi þe sterre ryseþ oute of þe reede eest. to falle
in þe westren wawes. and what attempriþ þe lusty
houres of þe fyrste somer sesoun þat hiþeþ and ap-*

the nature and
properties of the
seasons,

117 *paraileþ þe erþe wiþ rosene floures. ¶ And who
makeþ þat plenteuouse autumpne in fulle zeres fletip
wiþ heuy grapes. ¶ And eke þis man was wont to
telle þe dyuerses causes of nature þat weren yhid.*

and the hidden
causes of nature.

121 *¶ Allas now lieþ he emptid of lyzt of hys pouzt. and
hys nekke is pressid wiþ heuy cheynes and bereþ his
chere enclined adoune for þe greet[e] weyzt. and is*

But now, alas,
he is constrained
to keep his face
to the ground.

124 *constreynd to loke on foule erþe.*

SET MEDICINE INQUIT TEMPUS.

[The 1st prose.]

More need of
medicine than of
complaint.

Bvt tyme is now *quod* sche of medicine more þen of
compleynte. ¶ Forsope þen sche entendyng to
me warde wiþ al þe loking of hir eyen saide. ¶ Art

128 *not þou he quod sche þat sumtyme I-norschid wiþ my
mylke and fostre[d] wiþ my meetes were ascaped and
comen to corage of a perfit man. ¶ Certys I ȝaf þe*

Philosophy
addresses
Boethius.

108 *worldly*—wordely
104 *sumtyme*—whilom
106 *gone*—goon
106 *papes*—paathes
106 *saup*—sawh
106 *lyztnesse*—lythnesse
106 *sunne*—sonne
107 *wyche*—which
106 *risorses*—recourses
111 *seche*—seken
106 *sounyng*—sownyng

114 *ryseþ oute*—aryseth owt
114 *falle*—fallen
115 *westren*—westrene
116 *fyrste*—fyrst
119 *eko*—ek
120 *dyuerses*—dinerse
121 *yhid*—MS. yhidde
121 *lieþ*—lith
121 *emptid*—emted
123 *adowne*—adown
123 *greet[e] weyzt*—grete
weyhte

124 *loke*—foule—looken on
the fool
125, 126 *þen*—than
127 *al*—alle
127 *saide*—seyde
128 *sumtyme*—whilom
128 *I-norschid*—MS. I-nor-
schide, C. noryssed
129 *fostre[d]*—fostered
my—myne
130 *Certys*—Cartes
ȝaf, yaf

syche armures þat ȝif þou þi self ne haddest first caste
hem away. þei schulden haue defendid þe in sykernesse 132
þat may not be ouer-comen. ¶ Knowest þou me not.

* Why art þou stille. is it for schame or for astonynge.

It were me leuer þat it were for schame. but it semep
me þat astonynge haþ oppressed þe. ¶ And whan
sche say me not only stille. but wiþ-uten office of 137

tonge and al dounbe. sche leide hir honde softly vpon
my brest and seide. ¶ Here nis no peril quod sche.
¶ He is fallen in to a litargie. whiche þat is a comune
sekenes to hertes þat ben desceiued. ¶ He haþ a litel 141

forȝeten hym self. but certis he schal lyztly remembren
hym self. ¶ ȝif so be þat he haþ knowen me or now.
and þat he may so done I wil wipe a litel hys eyen.
þat ben derked by þe cloude of mortal pinges ¶ þise
wordes seide sche. and wiþ þe lappe of hir garment 146

yplited in a frounce sche dried[e] myn eyen þat were
ful of þe wawes of my wepynges.

[* fol. 4 b.]

She fears his
silence proceeds
from shame
rather than from
stupidity.She finds him,
however, in a
lethargy, the
distemper of a
disordered mind.To make his re-
covery an easy
matter, she wipes
his eyes, which
were darkened by
the clouds of
mortal things,and dries up his
tears.

TUNC ME DISCUSSA.

þus when þat nyȝt was discussed and chased away. [The 3rd Meter.]
derknesses forleften me. and to myn eyen repeyre
aȝeyne her firste strenkeþ. and ryȝt by ensample as 151

þe sonne is hid when þe sterres ben clustred. þat is to
sey when sterres ben couered wiþ cloudes by a swifte
wynde þat hyȝt chorus. and þat þe firmament stont
derked by wete ploungy cloudes. and þat þe sterres not
apperen vpon heuene. ¶ So þat þe nyȝt semep sprad 156
vpon erþe. ¶ Yif þan þe wynde þat hyȝt borias

Her touch dispels
the darkness of
his soul,just as the heavy
vapours, that
darken the skies
and obscure the
sunlight, are
chased away by
the north wind,

131 *syche*—swiche
ȝif—ȝif
caste—C. cast
132 *away*—away
schulden haue—sholden
han
133 *not be*—nat ben
Knowest þou—knowestow
134 *art þou*—artow
136 *haþ*—MS. haþe
138 *tonge*—tunge
dounbe—dowmb
honde—hand

139 *Here*—her
140 *litargie whiche*—litargo
whiche
141 *sekenes*—sykenesse
141, 143 *haþ*—MS. haþe
144 *done*—doon
wiþ wipe—wol wypen
146 *garment*—garnement
147 *dried[e]*—dryede
were—weeren
148 *ful*—fulle
149 *when*—whan
150 *myn*—myne

150 *repeyre*—repeyrede
151 *aȝeyne*—omitted
her firste—hir fyrst
152 *hid*—MS. hidde, C. hid
when—whan
153 *sey*—seyn
when—whan
154 *hyȝt*—heyhte
chorus—MS. chorus
stont—MS. stonde, C. stant
157 *þan*—thanne
wynde—wynd
hyȝt—hyhte

158 sent out of þe kaues of þe contre of Trace betiþ þis
 causing the return
 of the hidden day,
 when the sun
 smites our won-
 dering sight with
 his sudden light.
 nyzt. þat is to seyn chasiþ it away *and* descouereþ þe
 closed day. ¶ þan schineþ phebue yshaken wiþ
 sodeyne lyzt *and* smyteþ wiþ hys bemes in meruelyng
 162 eyen.

¹ MS. hanc.

HAUT¹ ALITER TRISTICIE.

[The 3^d prose.]

The clouds of
 sorrow being dis-
 pelled, Boethius
 recollects the
 features of his
 Physician,

whom he dis-
 covers to be
 Philosophy.

Ryzt so *and* none oþer wyse þe cloudes of sorowe
 dissolued *and* don away. ¶ I took heuene. *and*
 receyuede mynde to knowe þe face of my fyciscien.
 ¶ So þat I sette myne eyen on hir *and* festned[e] my
 lokyng. I byholde my norice philosophie. in whos
 houses I hadde conuersed *and* haunted fro my zouþe.

169 *and* I seide þus. ¶ O þou maistresse of alle uertues
 He addresses her. descendid fro þe souereyne sete. Whi art þou comen
 in to þis solitarie place of myn exil. ¶ Art þou comen

172 for þou art mad coupable wiþ me of fals[e] blames.
 She expresses her
 concern for him, ¶ O *quod* sche my norry scholde I forsake þe now. *and*
 scholde I not parte wiþ þe by comune trauaille þe charge
 þat þou hast suffred for envie of my name. ¶ Certis

176 it nar[e] not leueful ne sitting to philosophie to leten
 and tells him that
 she is willing to
 share his misfor-
 tunes. wiþ-uten compaignie þe wey of hym þat is innocent.
 ¶ Scholde I þan redoute my blame *and* agrisen as þou?

179 þer were byfallen a newe þing. q. d. non. ¶ For
 She fears not any
 accusation, as if
 it were a new
 thing. trowest þou þat philosophi be now alþerfirst assailed
 in perils by folk of wicked[e] maneres. ¶ Hauē I not

stryuen wiþ ful greet strife in olde tyme byfore þe
 age of my plato azeins þe foolhardines of foly *and*

184 eke þe same plato lyuyng. hys maistre socrates
 and by her help
 Socrates tri-
 umphed over an
 unjust death. deserued[e] victorie of vnryztful deef in my presence.
 ¶ þe heritage of wyche socrates. þe heritage is to seyne

158 sent—isent
 160 þan—thanne
 161 sodeyne—sodeyn
 163 none oþer—non oother
 sorowe—sorwe
 165 knowe—knowen
 166 myne—myn
 festned[e]—fastnede
 170 fro—from
 170, 171 art þou—artow

172 mad—MS. made, C. mak-
 fals[e]—false [ed]
 174 parte—parten
 176 nar[e]—nere
 sitting—sittinge
 178 þan—thanne
 179 þing—thing
 q. d. non—omitted
 180 trowest þou—trowestow
 alþerfirst—alderfirst

181 wicked[e]—wikkede
 182 strife—strif
 183 azeins—ayenis
 foolhardines—foolhardi-
 nesse
 foly—folle
 184 eke—ek
 185 deserued[e]—desseruede
 186 wyche—the which
 seyne—seyen

þe doctrine of þe whiche socrates in hys oppinioun of
 felicite þat I clepe welfulnesse ¶ Whan þat þe people
 of epicuriens *and* stoyciens *and* many oþer enforceden
 hem to go rauische eueryche man for his part þat is 190
 to seyne. þat to eueryche of hem wolde drawen to þe
 defence of his oppinioun þe wordes of socrates. ¶ þei
 as in partie of hir preye todrowen me cryinge *and*
 debatyng þer azeins. *and* tornen *and* torenten my cloþes 194
 þat I hadde wouen wip myn handes. *and* wip þe
 cloutes þat þei hadden arased oute of my cloþes. þei
 wenten away wenyng þat I hadde gon wip hem euery
 dele. In whiche epicuryens *and* stoyciens. for as 198
 myche as þer semed[e] somme traces *and* steppes of
 myne habit. þe folye of men wenyng þo epicuryens
and stoyciens my *familers peruertede (.s. persequendo)
 somme þoruþ þe errour of þe wikked[e] or vnkunn- 202
 yng[e] multitude of hem. ¶ þis is to seyne for þei
 semeden philosophres: þei weren pursued to þe deef
 and slayn. ¶ So yif þou hast not knowen þe exilyng
 of anaxogore. ne þe empoysenyng of socrates. ne þe 206
 tourmentz of zeno for þei [weren] straungers. ¶ 3it
 myztest þou haue knowen þe seneciens *and* þe Canyos
and þe sorancis of wyche folk þe renoun is neyþer ouer
 oolde ne vnsolempne. ¶ þe whiche men no þing ellys 210
 ne brouzt[e] hem to þe deef but oonly for þei weren
 enfourned of my maneres. *and* semeden moste vnylke
 to þe studies of wicked folk. ¶ And forþi þou auztest
 not to wondre þouþ þat I in þe bitter see of þis lijf be 214

Of the inheritance
 of Socrates the
 rout of Epicureans
 and Stoics wanted
 to get a part.

Philosophy with-
 stood them,
 whereupon they
 tore her robe,
 and, departing
 with the shreds,

imagined that
 they had got
 possession of her.

Thus, clothed
 with her spoils,
 they deceived
 many.
 [fol. 5.]

Philosophy
 adduces
 examples of wise
 men, who had
 laboured under

difficulties on
 account of being
 her disciples.

188 *welfulnesse* — weleful-
 189 *oþer* — oother [nesse]
 190 *go* — gon
eueryche — euerich
 191 *seyne* — seyn
to — omitted
eueryche — euerich
 194 *tornen* — read coruen, C.
 koruen
 196 *wouen* — MS. wonnen, C.
 wouen
 196 *arased* — arraced
 197 *gon* — MS. gone, C. gon
 198 *dele* — del
 199 *myche* — moche

199 *semed[e]* — semede
and — or
 200 *myne* — myn
wenyng — MS. wevying, C.
 weninge
 202 *þoruþ* — thorw
wikked[e] — wikkede
vnkunnynge — vnkuun-
 203 *seyne* — seyn þat lyng
 204 *semeden* — semede
pursued — MS. pursuede,
 C. pursued
 206 *slayn* — MS. slayne, C.
 slayn
 207 [*weren*] — waeren

208 *myztest þou haue* —
 myhtestow han
 209 *sorancis* — sorans
wyche — which
is — nis
 210 *oolde* — MS. colde, O. old
 211 *brouzt[e]* — browhte
 212 *enfourned* — MS. vn-
 fourmed, C. enformyd
my — myne
vnylke — vnylk
 213 *wikked folk* — wikkede
auztest — owhtest [foolke]
 214 *wondre* — wondren
bittler — bittre

It is the aim of
Philosophy to
displease the
wicked,

who are more to
be despised than
dreaded, for they
have no leader.

If Philosophy is
attacked by the
wicked, she re-
tires within her
fortress,

leaving the enemy
busy among the
useless baggage,
and laughing to
scorn such hunt-
ers of trifles.

fordryuen wip tempestes blowyng aboute. in þe whiche
tempeste þis is my most purpos pat is to seyn to dis-

217 please to wikked[e] men. ¶ Of whiche schrews al be
þe oost neuer so grete it is to dispyse. for it nis gouerned
wip no leder of resounne. but it is rauysched only by

220 flityng errorr folyly and lyztly. ¶ And if þei somtyme
makyng an ost a3eynest vs assaile vs as strengere. oure
leder draweþ to gedir hys rycchesse in to hys toure.
and þei ben ententif aboute sarpulers or sachels vn-
profitable forto taken. but we þat ben hey3 abouen syker

225 fro al tumulte and wode noise. ben stored and enclosed
in syche a palays. whider as þat chateryng or anoying
folye ne may not attayne. ¶ We scorne swiche
rauiners and honters of foulest[e] þinges.

QUISQVIS COMPOSITO.

[The fether
Meter.]
He who hath
triumphed over
fate, and remained
insensible to the

changes of For-
tune, shall not be
moved by storms,
nor by the fires
of Vesuvius,
nor by the fiercest
thunderbolts.

Fear not the
tyrant's rage.

He who neither
fears nor hopes

Who so it be þat is clere of vertue sad and wel ordinat
of lyuyng. þat haþ put vnderfote þe prowed[e]
wierdes and lokip vpryzt vpon eyþer fortune. he may

232 holde hys chiere vndiscomfited. ¶ þe rage ne þe manace
of þe commoeuyng or chasyng vpwarde hete fro þe
botme. ne schal not moeue þat man. ne þe vnstable
mountaigne þat hyzt veseuus. þat wircheþ oute þoru3

236 hys broken[e] chemineys smokyng fires. ¶ Ne þe wey
of þonder lyzt þat is wont to smyte hey3e toures ne
schal not mouene þat man. ¶ Wherto þen wrecches
drede 3e tyrauntes þat ben wode and felownes wip-uten
ony strenkep. ¶ Hope after no þing ne drede nat. and

216 *displease*—displeen
217 *wikked[e]*—wikkede
schrews—shrewes
218 *oost*—gloosed *acies* in C.
grete—gret
218, 222 *leder*—ledere
220 *flityng*—fleetyng
lyztly—lythly
3e—yif
221 *a3eynest*—ayenis
222 *to*—*rycchesse*, to gy-
dere hys rycchesse
toure—towr
224 *hey3*—heye

225 *al*—alle
ben—omitted
stored—warrestored
226 *syche*—swich
pat—omitted
227 *scorne*—schorne
228 *rauiners*—*þinges*—
rauyneres & henteres of
fowleste thynges
228 *clere*—cleer
230 *lyuyng*—leuyng
haþ—MS. hape
vnderfote—vndir-foot
prowed[e]—prowde

231 *may*—*chiere*—may his
cheere holde
232 *manace*—manesses
233 *þe*—þe see
235 *hyzt*—hihte
veseuus—MS. veseuus
wircheþ—writith
236 *broken[e]*—brokene
smokyng—smokyng
237 *smyle*—smyten
238 *Wherto þen*—wharto
thanne
239 *felownes*—*ony*—felo-
nos withoute any

so schalt þou desarmen þe ire of þilke vnmȳzty tyraunt. for anything dis-
arms the tyrant.
¶ But who so þat quakyng dredeþ or desaireþ þing þat He whose heart
falls him, yields
his arms,
and forges his
own fetters.
nis not stable of his ryȳt. þat man þat so doþ haþ cast
away hys schelde *and* is remoeued fro hys place. *and*
enlaceþ hym in þe cheyne wiþ whiche he may be 245
drawen.

SENTIS NE INQUIT.

Felest þou *quod* sche þise þinges *and* entren þei ouȳt [The verthe
prose.]
in þi corage. ¶ Art þou like an asse to þe harpe. Philosophy seeks
to know the
malady of
Boethius.
Whi wepest þou whi spillest þou teres. ¶ Yif þou
abidest after helpe of þi leche. þe byhoueþ discouere þi 250
wounde. ¶ þo .I. þat hadde gadered strenkeþ in my
corage answered[e] *and* seide. *and* nedeþ it ȳtte *quod*
.I. of rehersyng or of amonicioun. *and* scheweþ it not 253
ynouȳ by hym self þe scharpnes of fortune þat wexeþ
woode aȳynes me. ¶ Ne moeueþ it nat þe to seen þe
face or þe manere of þis place (.i. prisoun.). ¶ Is þis
þe librarie wyche þat þou haddeþ chosen for a ryȳt 257
certeyne sege to þe in myne house. ¶ þere as þou
desputest off[te] wiþ me of þe sciences of þinges touch-
ing diuinitee *and* touchyng mankynde. ¶ Was þan
myn habit swiche as it is now. was þan my face or 261
my chere swiche as now. ¶ Whan I souȳt[e] wiþ þe
secretys of nature. whan þou enfourmedest my maners
and þe resoun of al my lijf. to þe ensauple of þe ordre 264
of heuene. ¶ Is nat þis þe gerdoun þat I refere to þe
to whom I haue be obeisaunt. ¶ Certis þou enfour-
medist by þe mouþe of plato þis sentence. þat is to
seyne þat commune þinges or comunabletes weren Is not aþe moved,
he asks, with the
aspect of his
prison?
His libary, his
habit, and his
countenance are
all changed.
Is this, he asks,
the reward of his
fidelity?
Plato (de Rep. v.)
says that those
Commonwealths

241 schalt þou desarmen—
shaltow deserulen
248 doþ—MS. doþe, C. doth
haþ—MS. haþe, C. hath
cast—MS. caste, C. cast
244 schelde—aheid
remoeued fro — remwed
from
245 whiche—the which
be—ben
247 Feleest þou—Felistow
ouȳt—awht

248 art þou—artow
249 wepest þou—wepistow
spillest þou—spillestow
252 answered[e]—answer-
ede
255 woode—wood
257 wyche—which
258 myne house þere—myn
hows ther
259 desputest of[te]—des-
putedest ofte
260 þan—thanne

261 it and þan—both omitted
261, 262 swiche—awich
262 souȳt[e]—sowhte
263 secretys—secretȳ
my—MS. me, C. my
264 al—alle
265 gerdoun—gerdouns
266 enfourmedist—conform-
edest
267 mouþe—mowht
268 comunabletes—comuna-
litees

are most happy
that are governed
by philosophers,
or by those who
study to be so.
[*fol. 5 b.*]

blysful yif þei þat haden studied al fully to wisdom
gouerneden pilke þinges. or ellys yif it so by-felle þat
þe gouernours *of communalites studieden in grete wis-

272 domes. ¶ þou saidest eke by þe mouþe of þe same
plato þat it was a necessarie cause wyse men to taken
and desire þe gouernaunce of comune þinges. for þat þe
gouernementes of comune citees y-left in þe hondes of

The same Plato
urged philoso-
phers to take
upon them the
management of
public affairs,

276 felonous tourmentours Citizenis ne scholde not brynge
inne pestilence and destruccioun to goode folk. ¶ And
perfore I folowynge þilk auctoritee (s. platonis). desiryng

lest it should fall
into the hands of
unprincipled
citizens.

279 to put[te] furþe in execucioun and in acte of comune
administracioun þo þinges þat .I. hadde lerned of þe
among my secre restyng whiles. ¶ þou and god þat
put[te] þee in þe þouȝtis of wise folk ben knowen wiþ
me þat no þing brouȝt[e] me to maistrie or dignite: but

Boethius declares
that he desired to
put in practice
(in the manage-
ment of public
affairs) what he
had learnt in his
retirement.

284 þe comune studie of al goodenes. ¶ And þer-of comþ
it þat by-twixen wikked folk and me han ben greuous
discordes. þat ne myȝten not be releued by prayeres.

He sought to do
good to all, but
became involved
in discord with
the wicked.

¶ For þis libertee haþ fredom of conscience þat þe wrappe
288 of more myȝty folk haþ alwey ben despised of me for
saluacioun of ryȝt. ¶ How ofte haue .I. resisted and
wipstonde þilk man þat hyȝt[e] conigaste þat made
alwey assautes aȝeins þe propre fortunes of poure feble

Consciousness of
integrity made
him despise the
anger of the most
powerful.

292 folke. ¶ How ofte haue .I. ȝitte put of. or cast out
hym trigwille pronost of þe kynges hous boþe of þe
wronges þat he hadde bygon[ne] to done and eke fully
performed. ¶ How ofte haue I couered and defended

He opposed
Conigastus,
and put a stop to
the doings of
Trigulla.

296 by þe auctorite of me put aȝeins perils. þat is to seine put
myne auctorite in peril for þe wretched pore folke. þat

270 by-felle—byfalle
271 in grete wisdom—to
geten wysdom
272 eke—ek
275 comune—omitted
y-left—MS. yleft, C. yleft
276 Citizenis—citizenis
brynge inne—bryngen in
278 perfore—therfor
þilk—thilke
desiryng—desired
279 put[te] furþe—putten

forth
280 þo—thilke
282 put[te]—putte
283 browȝt[e]—ne browhte
284 þe—omitted
al goodenes—alle good-
nesse
comþ—comth
287, 288 haþ—MS. haþe
289 saluacioun—saluacioun
290 þilk—thilke
hyȝt[e]—hyhte

290 conigaste—MS. coniu-
gasto
292 ofte—ofte ek
ȝitte—omitted
294 bygon[ne]—bygunne
done—don
295 couered—MS. couerede,
C. couered
296 put—MS. putte, C. put
seine—seyn
297 myne—myn

þe couetise of straungeres vnpunysched *tourmentid* alwey thorly in perill for the defence of poor folk.
 wiþ myseses *and* greunaunces oute of noumbre. ¶ Neuer
 man drow me zitte fro ryzt to wrong. When I say þe I never deviated, he says, from the path of justice.
 fortunes *and* þe rychesse of þe people of þe prouinces
 ben harmed eyþer by priue rauynes or by comune 302
 tributis or cariages. as sory was I as þei þat suffred[e] I felt for those that were wrongfully oppressed.
 þe harme. *Glosu.* ¶ Whan þat theodoric þe kyng of
 gothes in a dere zere hadde hys gerneris ful of corne
and comaundede þat no man ne schold[e] bis no corne 306
 til his corne were solde *and* þat at a dere greuous pris.
 ¶ But I *withstod* þat ordinaunce *and* ouer-com it
 knowyng al þis þe kyng hym self. ¶ Coempcioun þat
 is to seyn comune achat or bying to-gidere þat were 310
 establissed vpon poeple by swiche a manere imposicioun
 as who so bouzt[e] a busschel corn he most[e] zeue þe
 kyng þe fiste part. *Textus.* ¶ Whan it was in þe 313
 soure hungry tyme þere was establissed or cried greuous
and inplitable coempcioun þat men seyn wel it schulde
 greetly *tourmentyn* *and* endamagen al þe prouince of 316
 compaigne I took strif azeins þe prouost of þe pretorie
 for comune profit. ¶ And þe kyng knowyng of it I I saved Paulinus out of the hands of the hounds of the palace (Palatini comes).
 ouercom it so þat þe coempcioun ne was not axed ne
 took effect. ¶ Paulyn a counseiller of Rome þe rychesse
 of þe whyche paulyn þe houndys of þe palays. þat is to 321
 seyn þe officeres wolde han deuoured by hope *and*
 couetise. ¶ 3it drow I hym out of þe lowes .s. faucibus
 of hem þat gapeden. ¶ And for as myche as þe peyne 324
 of þe accusacioun aiuged byform ne scholde not sodeynly I defended Albinus against Cyprian.
 henten ne punischen wrongfully Albyn a counseiller of

298 *vnpunysched*—vnpunys-
 sed
 299 *myseses*—myseses
 300 *drow*—MS. drowe, C.
 with drowh
 310 *zitte*—zit
 wrong—wronge
 301 *rychesse*—richesses
 þe (2)—omitted
 302 *harmed eyþer*—harmyd
 or amennused owther
 303 *tributis*—tributis
suffred[e]—suffreden

304 *harne*—harm
 305 *zere*—yer
 306 *hys*—hise
 306, 306, 307 *corne*—corn
 306 *schold[e]* *dis*—sholde
 byen
 308 *But I withstod*—Boece
 withstood (MS. with-
 stode)
 com—MS. come, C. com
 311 *swiche*—swich
 312 *bouzt[e]*—bowhte
busschel—bossel

313 *most[e] zeue*—moste zeue
 315 *inplitable*—vnpiltable
seyn—saien
 319 *ouercom*—MS. ouer-
 come, C. ouer com
 320 *counseiller*—consoler
rychesse—richesses
 321 *whyche*—which
 322 *wolde*—wolden
 328 *drow*—MS. drowe, C.
 drowh
 324 *mysche*—moche
 326 *punischen*—punisse

- Rome. I put[te] me azenis þe hates *and* indignaciouns
 328 of þe accusour Ciprian. ¶ Is it not þan ynought yseyn
 þat I haue purchased greet[e] discordes azeins my self.
 but I aughte be more assured azenis alle oper folk þat
 for þe loue of ryztwysnesse .I. ne reserued[e] neuer no
 332 þing to my self to hem ward of þe kynges halle .s. officers.
 by þe whiche I were þe more syker. ¶ But þoruþ þe
 same accusours accusyng I am condempned. ¶ Of
 þe noumbre of whiche accusours one basilus þat som-
 tyme was chased out of þe kynges seruice. is now com-
 337 pelled in accusyng of my name for nede of foreine
 moneye. ¶ Also opilion *and* Gaudencius han accused
 me. al be it so þat þe Iustice regal hadde sumtyme demed
 340 hem bope to go in to exil. for her treccheries *and* fraudes
 wip-outen noumbre. ¶ To whiche iugement þei wolde
 not obeye. but defended[e] hem by sykernesse of holy
 houses. *þat is to seyne fledden in to seyntuaries. *and*
 whan þis was aperceiued to þe kyng. he comaunded[e]
 but þat þei voided[e] þe citee of Rauenne by certeyne
 day assigned þat men scholde merken hem on þe for-
 347 heued wip an hoke of iren *and* chasen hem out of toun.
 ¶ Now what þing semep þe myzt[e] be lykned to þis
 cruelte. For certys pilk same day was receyued þe ac-
 cusyng of my name by pilk[e] same accusours. ¶ What
 may be seid herto. hap my studie *and* my konnyng
 352 deserued þus. or ellys þe forseide dampnacioun of me.
 made þat hem ryztful accusours or no (q.d. non).
 ¶ Was not fortune asshamed of þis. [Certes alle hadde
 nat fortune ben asshamyd] þat innocence was accused.
 357 3it auzt[e] sche haue had schame of þe filþe of myn ac-

For the love of
justice I forfeited
all favour at
Court.

Boethius makes
mention of his
accusers, Basilus,
Opilio, Gauden-
tius,

[* fol. 6.]

men who had
been commanded
to leave the city
on account of
their many
crimes.

But, on the day
this sentence was
to be executed,
they accused him,
and their testi-
mony against
him was accepted.

Fortune, if not
ashamed at this,
might at least
blush for the
baseness of the
accusers.

327 put[te]—putte
328 yseyn—MS. yseyne
329 greet[e]—greete
330 aughte be—owhte be the
oper—oothre
333 by þe whiche—by which
þoruþ þe—thorw tho
336 whiche—the whiche
one—oon
somyne—whilom
339 sumtyme—whilon
340 go—gon
her—hir

341 wip-outen—withowte
wolde not—nolden nat
342 defended[e]—defendedyn
by—by the
343 seyne—seyne
seyntuaries—sentuarye
344 was—omitted
comaunded[e]—comaun-
dede
345 voided[e]—voidede
certeyne—certeyn
346 men—me
merken—marke

347 hoke of iren—hoot yren
348 be—omitted
myzt[e] be—myhte ben
349 pilk—thilke
350 pilk[e]—thilke
351 be—ben
352 seid—MS. seide, C. seyð
hap—MS. hape
354, 355 [Certes—assa-
myd]—from C.
356 auzt[e]—owte
haue had—han had, MS.
hadde

cusours. ¶ But axest þou in somme of what gilt .I. 357

am accused. men seyne þat I wolde sauē þe compaignie of þe senatours. ¶ And desirest þou to here in what manere .I. am accused þat I scholde han distourbed þe accusour to beren lettres. by whiche he

Boethius says he is accused of trying to save the Senate, and of having embarrassed an informer against the Senate.

scholde han maked þe senatours gilti azeins þe kynges 362

Real maieste. ¶ O meistresse what demest þou of þis. schal .I. forsake þis blame þat I ne be no schame to þe (q. d. non). ¶ Certis .I. haue wold it. þat is to 365

seyne þe sauacioun of þe senat. ne I schal neuer leten to wilne it. and þat I confesse and am a-knowe. but þe entent of þe accusour to be destourbed schal cese.

It is true that he tried to save the Senate, for he has and will have its best interests always at heart.

¶ For schal I clepe it a felonie þan or a synne þat I 369

haue desired þe sauacioun of þe ordre of þe senat.

and certys ȝit hadde þilk same senat don by me þoruȝ

her decretȝ and hire iugementys as þouȝ it were a synne

or a felonie þat is to seyne to wilne þe sauacioun of 373

hem (.s. senatus). ¶ But folye þat lieth alwey to hym

(Folly cannot change the merit of things.)

self may not chaunge þe merit of þinges. ¶ Ne .I.

trowe not by þe iugement of socrates þat it were leue- 376

ful to me to hide þe soþe. ne assent[e] to lesynges.

According to Socrates' judgment it is not lawful to hide the truth nor assent to a falsehood.)

¶ But certys how so euer it be of þis I put[te] it to gessen

or preisen to þe iugement of þe and of wise folk. ¶ Of

whiche þing al þe ordinaunce and þe soþe for as moche 380

as folk þat ben to comen aftir oure dayes schollen

knownen it. ¶ I haue put it in scripture and remem-

Boethius determines to transmit an account of his prosecution to posterity.

braunce. for touching þe lettres falsly maked. by

whiche lettres I am accused to han hooped þe fredom of

Rome. What apperteneþ me to speken þer-of. Of 385

whiche lettres þe fraude hadde ben schewed apertly if

357 *axest þou*—axestow

358 *seyne*—seyn

saue—saue

359 *desirest þou*—desires

thow

here—hereen

363 *maked*—MS. maken, C.

makyd

363 *demest þou*—demestow

365 *wold*—MS. wolde, C.

wold

366 *seyne*—seyn

367 *þat*—omitted

am—I am

368 *be*—ben

369 *it*—it thanne

þan—omitted

371 *þilk*—þilke

373 *her*—hir

þire—hir

373 *þouȝ*—thogh

373 *or*—and

seyne—seyn

374 *lieth*—MS. lieþe, C. lieth

377 *assent[e]*—assente

381 *schollen*—shellen

382 *and*—and in

385 *speken*—speke

of—lettres—C. omits

386 *if*—yif

Boethius says
that he could
have defeated his
accusers had he
been allowed the
use of their con-
fessions.

I hadde had libertee forto han vsed *and*, ben at þe
confessioun of myn accusours. ¶ þe whiche þing in
alle nedys haþ grete strenkeþ. ¶ For what oþer freedom

391 myzt[e] be hoped. ¶ I wolde þan haue answered by
þe wordes of a man þat hyzt[e] Canius. for whan he was
accused by Gayus Cesar Germeins son þat he (canius)
was knowyng *and* consentyng of a coniuracioun maked
aþeins hym (.s. Gaius). ¶ þis Canius answered[e]

But there is now
no remains of
liberty to be
hoped for.

396 þus. ¶ Yif I had[de] wist it þou haddest not wist
it. In whiche þing sorwe haþ not so dulleþ my witte
þat I pleyne oonly þat schrewed[e] folk apparailen
folies aþeins vertues. ¶ But I wondre gretly how þat

It is not strange
that the wicked
should conspire
against virtue.

400 þei may performe pinges þat þei had[de] hoped forto
done. For why. to wylne schrewednesse þat comeþ
paraurenture of oure defeaute. ¶ But it is lyke to a
monstre *and* a meruaille. ¶ How þat in þe present

The will to do ill
proceeds from the
defects of human
nature.

404 syzt of god may ben acheued *and* performed swiche
pinges. as euery felonous man haþ conceyued in hys
þouzt aþeins innocent. ¶ For whiche þing oon of þi

It is a marvel
how such evil
acts can be done
under the eye of
an Omniscient
God.

familers not vnskilfully axed þus. ¶ 3if god is. whennes
comen wikked[e] pinges. *and* yif god ne is whennes
comen goode pinges. but al hadde it ben leueful þat

If there be a God,
whence proceeds
evil? If there is
none, whence
arises good?

409 felonous folk þat now desiren þe bloode *and* þe deep of
alle goode men. *and* eke of al þe senat han wilned to
gone destroyen me. whom þei han seyn alwey batailen

413 *and* defenden goode men *and* eke al þe senat. 3it
hadde I not desserued of þe padres. þat is to seyne of
þe senatours þat þei scholde wilne my destruccioun.

387 *had*—MS. hade, C. had
388 *myn*—myne
389 *haþ*—MS. haþe, C. hath
390 *grete*—gret
391 *what*—omitted
392 *some*—soin
393 *myzt[e] be*—myhte ben
394 *þan haue*—thanne han
395 *hyzt[e]*—hyhte
396 *maked*—ymaked
397 *answered[e]*—answerode
398 *had[de]*—haddo

397 *whiche*—which
398 *sorwe*—sorw
399 *haþ*—MS. haþe
400 *wille*—wit
401 *schrewed[e]*—shrewede
402 *folies*—felonies
403 *vertues*—vertu
404 *had[de]*—han
405 *done*—don
406 *comeþ*—comth
407 *lyke to a*—lyk a
408 *syzt*—syhte

405 *haþ*—MS. haþe
406 *innocent*—innocent
407 *whiche*—which
408 *wikked[e]*—wykkede
409 *bloode*—blod
410 *eko*—ek
411 *gone*—gon *and*
412 *seyn*—soyen
413 *eko*—ek
414 *seyne*—seyn
415 *scholde*—sholden

¶ þou remembreſt wele as I geſſe þat whan I wolde
don or *ſeyn any þing. þou þi ſelf alwey preſent re-
weledeſt me. ¶ At þe citee of verone whan þat þe
kyng gredy of comune ſlauȝter. caſte hym to trans-
porten vpon al þe ordre of þe ſenat. þe gilt of his real 420
maieſte of þe whiche gilt þat albyn was accuſed. wiþ
how grete ſykerneſſe of peril to me defended[e] I al 422
þe ſenat. ¶ þou woſt wel þat I ſeide ſoþe. ne I
aunaunted[e] me neuer in preysyng of my ſelf. ¶ For
alwey when any wyȝt reſceineþ preciouſe renoun in
aunauntyng hym ſelf of hys werkes: he amenusiþ þe
ſecre of hys conſcience. ¶ But now þou mayſt wel 427
ſeen to what ende I am comen for myne innocence.
I receiue peyne of fals felonie in gerdoun of verray
vertue. ¶ And what open confeſſioun of felonie
had[de] ener iugis ſo accordaunt in cruelte. þat iſ to
ſeyne as myne accuſyng haþ. ¶ þat oper errour of 432
manswitte or ellyscondicioun of fortune þat iſ vncerteine
to al mortal folk ne ſubmytted[e] ſumme of hem. þat iſ
to ſeyne þat it ne cheyned[e] ſumme iuge to han pitee 435
or compaſſioun. ¶ For al þouȝ I had[de] ben accuſed
þat I wolde brenne holy houſes. and ſtrangle preſtyſ
wiþ wicked ſwerde. ¶ or þat .I. had[de] grayped deep
to alle goode men algatis þe ſentence ſcholde han
punyſched me preſent confeſſed or conuict. ¶ But 440
now I am remewed fro þe Citee of rome almoſt fyue-
hundreþ þouſand paſ. I am wiþ outen defence dampned
to proſcripcioun and to þe deep. for þe studie and
bountees þat I haue done to þe ſenat. ¶ But o wel ben 444
þei worþi of mercye (as who ſeiþ nay.) þer myȝt[e] neuer

Boethius defends
the integrity of
[fol. 6 b.]
his life.

He defended the
Senate at Verona.

He ſpake only
the truth, and did
not boſt.

(Boaſting leſſens
the pleaſure of a
ſelf approving
conſcience.)

But as the reward
of his innocence
he iſ made to
ſuffer the puniſh-
ment due to the
blackeſt crime.

Had he ben
accuſed of a do-
ſign to burn
temples, maſ-
ſacre prieſte, he
would haue ben
allowed to con-
front his accuſers.

But now this iſ
denied him, and
he iſ proſcribed
and condemned
to death.

416 *wole*—wel
417 *don*—MS. done, C. doon
418 *ſeyn*—ſeyen
419 *þe* (1)—omitted
420 *ſlauȝter*—ſlawhtre
421 *transporten* *epon* —
transport vp
422 *grete*—gret
423 *defended[e]*—deffendede
424 *ſeide ſoþe*—ſeye ſoth
425 *aunaunted[e]*—aunauntede

425 *when*—whan
426 *precious*—preſious
427 *in*—for
428 *vertue*—vertu
429 *had[de]*—haddo
430 *ſeyne*—ſeyn
431 *myne*—myn
432 *haþ*—MS. haþe
433 *witte*—wit
434 *uncerteine*—vncerteyn
435 *al*—alle

434 *submytted[e]*—submit-
435 *ſeyne*—ſeyn [ede]
436 *cheyned[e]*—enclinede
437 *had[de]*—haddo
438 *wicked*—wykkede
439 *had[de]*—haddo
440 *almost*—almest
441 *þouſand*—MS. þouſas
442 *wiþ outen*—withowte
443 *done*—doon
444 *myȝt[e]*—myhte

- 446 *zit non of hem ben conuicte. Of swiche a blame as*
myn is of swiche trespas myn accusours seyen ful wel
pe dignitee. pe wiche dignite for pei wolde derken it
wip medelyng of some felonye. pei beren me on honde
 450 *and liden. pat I hadde polute and defouled my con-*
science wip sacrelege. for couetise of dignite. ¶ And
certys pou pi self pat art plaunted in me chacedest oute
pe sege of my corage al couetise of mortal pinges. ne
 454 *sacrilege ne had[de] no leue to han a place in me byforne*
pine eyen. ¶ For pou drouppedest euery day in myn
eeres and in my pouzt pilk comaundement of pictogoras.
pat is to seyne men schal seruen to god. and not to
 458 *goddes. ¶ Ne it was no couenaunt ne no nede to*
taken helpe of pe foulest spirites. ¶ I pat pou hast
ordeyned or set in syche excellence pat [pou] makedest
 461 *me lyke to god. and ouer pis pe ryzt clene secre*
chaumbre of myn house. pat is to seye my wijf and pe
compaignie of myn honeste frendis. and my wyues
fadir as wel holy as worþi to ben reuerenced þoruȝ
 465 *hys owen dedis. defenden me of al suspeccioun of syche*
blame. ¶ But o malice. ¶ For pei pat accusen me
taken of pe philosophie feipe of so grete blame. ¶ For
pei trowen pat .I. haue had affinite to malyfice or en-
chaumententȝ by cause pat I am replenissed and ful-
 470 *filled wip pi techynges. and enformed of pi maners.*
¶ And þus it sufficeþ not only pat pi reuerence ne auayle
me not. but ȝif pat pou of pi fre wille raper be blemissed
wip myne offensioun. ¶ But certys to pe harmes pat I
 474 *haue þere bytydeþ ȝit pis encrece of harme. pat þe*

Boethius says
that his enemies
accused him of
sorcery.

He affirms that
he has always
followed the
golden maxim of
Pythagoras,—
εὖ καὶ ὀλίγον.

His family and
friends could clear
him from all sus-
picion of the
crime of sorcery.

Because he has
given himself up
to Philosophy,
his enemies accuse
him of using un-
lawful arts.

446 *ben*—be
swiche—swich
 447 *myn (both)*—myne
swiche—whiche
seyen—sayen
 448 *wolde*—wolden
 449 *somo*—som
beren—baren
on honde—an hand
 450 *polute*—pout
 451 *sacrelege*—C. has sor-
 cerie as a gloss to sacri-
 lege
 453 *al*—alle

454 *had[de]*—hadde
byforne—byform
 455 *drouppedest*—dropped-
 est
myn—myne
 456 *pilk*—thilke
 457 *seyne*—seyn
seruen—serue
god—godde
 458 *helpe*—help
spirites—spirite
 460 *set*—MS. sette, C. set
syche—swiche
 [pou]—thow

461 *lyke*—lyk
 462 *house*—hows
seye—seyn
 463 *myn*—my
 465 *owen*—owne
of al—from alle
syche—swich
 467 *philosophie*—philosophre
feipe—feyth
grete—gret
 468 *had*—MS. hadde, C. had
 473 *myn*—myn
 474 *þere*—ther
harme—harm

gessinge *and* þe ingement of myche folk ne loken no 475

þing to þe[de]sertys of þinges but only to þe auenture
of fortune. ¶ And iugen þat only swiche þinges ben
purueied of god. whiche þat temporel welefulnesse
commendip. *Glosa.* ¶ As þus þat yif a wyzt haue

Most people
imagine that that
only shold be
judged to be
undertaken with
prudent foresight
which is crowned
with success.

prosperite. he is a good man *and* worpi. to haue þat 480

prosperite. and who so hap aduersite he is a wikked
man. *and* god hap forsake hym. *and* he is worpi to
haue þat aduersite. ¶ þis is þe opinioun of somme

The unfortunate
lose the good
opinion of the
world.

folke. **and* þer of comeþ þat good gessyng. ¶ Fyrste of
al þing forsakeþ wrecches certys it greueþ me to þink[e] 485

[* Text begins
again.]

ryzt now þe dyuerse sentences þat þe poeple seiþ of

me. ¶ And þus moche I seye þat þe laste charge of 487

contrarious fortune is þis. † þat whan þat ony blame is

[† fol. 7.]

laid vpon a caytif. men wenen þat he hap deserued þat

he suffreþ. ¶ And I þat am put away from goode men

Boethius laments
the loss of his
dignities and
reputation.

and despoiled from dignitees *and* defouldid of my name

by gessyng haue suffred torment for my goode dedis. 492

¶ Certys me semeþ þat I se þe felonus couines of

wikked men abunden in ioie *and* in gladnes. ¶ And

The wicked, he
says, sin with
impunity.

I se þat euery lorel shapiþ hym to fynde oute newe

fraudes forto accusen goode folke. and I se þat goode 496

men ben ouerþrowen for drede of my peril. ¶ *and*

euery luxurious tourmentour dar don alle felonie vn-

punissed *and* ben excited þerto by ziftes. and innocent; 499

ne ben not oonly despoiled of sykernesse but of de-

while the inno-
cent are deprived
of security, pro-
tection, and
defence.

fence *and* þefore me list to crien to god in þis manere.

O STELLIFERI CONDITOR ORBIS.

O þou maker of þe whele þat bereþ þe sterres. whiche [The fiftie metw.]
þat art fastned to þi perdurable chayere. *and* Author of the
starry sky, Thou,

475 *myche*—moche

476 *þe[de]sertys*—the desert;

479 *Glosa*—glose

480 *good*—MS. goode, C.

good

haue—han

481 *so*—omitted in C.

481, 482 *hap*—MS. haþe

483 *haue*—han

484 *Fyrste*—fyrst

485 *al*—alle

þink[e]—thinke

488 *ony*—any

489 *laide*—MS. laide, C. leyd

hap—MS. haþe

490 *put*—MS. putte, C. put

491 *from*—of

494 *abunden*—habownden

494 *gladnes*—gladnesse

495 *oute*—owt

496 *accusen*—accuse

497 *ben*—beth

501 *manere*—wise

502 *whele*—whel

whiche—which

503 *fastned*—yfastned

chayere—chayer

seated on high,
turnest the
spheres, and
imposest laws
upon the stars
and planets.

turnest þe heuene wip a rauyssyng sweighe *and* con-
streinest þe sterres to suffren þi lawe. ¶ So þat þe
mone somtyme schynyng wip hir ful hornes metyng

507 wip alle þe bemes of þe sonne. ¶ Hir broþer hideþ þe
sterres þat ben lasse. *and* somtyme whan þe mone
pale wip hir derke hornes approchē þe sonne. leesith
hir lyztes. ¶ And þat þe euesterre esperus whiche

The sun obscures
the lesser lights,
and quenches
even the moon's
light.

511 þat in þe first[e] tyme of þe nyzt bryngēþ furþe hir
colde arsynges comēþ eft aȝeynes hir vsed cours. *and*
is pale by þe morwe at þe rysyng of þe sonne. *and* is
þan cleped lucifer. ¶ þou restrainest þe day by schorter
dwelliŋg in þe tyme of colde wynter þat makeþ þe

Thou raisest
Hesperus to usher
in the shades of
night, and again
causest him to be
the harbinger of
day, whence his
name Lucifer.

516 leues to falle. ¶ þou diuident þe swifte tides of þe
nyzt when þe hote somer is comen. ¶ þi myzt at-
tempre[þ] þo variauntȝ sesons of þe ȝere. so þat
ȝepherus þe deboneire wynde bringēþ aȝein in þe first[e]

Thou controllest
the changing
seasons of the
year.

520 somer sesoun þe leues þat þe wynde þat hyzt[e] boreas
haþ reft away in autumpne. þat is to seyne in þe laste
eende of somer. *and* þe sedes þat þe sterre þat hyzt arc-

523 turus saw ben waxen hey[e] cornes whan þe sterre
sirius eschaufēþ hym. ¶ þere nis no þing vnbounde
from hys olde lawe ne forleteþ hym of hys propre estat.

All nature is
bound by thy
eternal law.

526 ¶ O þou gouernour gouernyng alle þinges by certeyne
ende. why refusest þou oonly to gouerne þe werkes of
men by dewe manere. ¶ Whi suffrest þou þat slid-
yng fortune turnēþ to grete vtter chaungynges of þinges.
so þat anioius peyne þat scholde duelly punisshē fel-
ouns punissitȝ innocentȝ. ¶ And folk of wikked[e]

Why, then, leauest
thou man's ac-
tions uncon-
trolled?

Why should
fickle fortune be
allowed to work
such mighty
changes in the
world?

532 maneres sitten in heize chaires. *and* anoienge folk

504 *seueighe*—sweygh
constreineſt, MS. con-
treuleſt, C. conſtreynest

506 *hir*—here

508 *laſſe*—leſſe

510 *esperus whiche*—heſ-
perus which

511 *ſtre[e]*—ſyrſte

furþe—forth

512 *eft*—eſt

514 *reſtreineſt*—MS. re-
ſtreneſt

516 *to*—omitted

518 *attempre[þ]*—þo—atemp-

reth the

518 *ſeſone*—ſeſoun

ȝere—ȝer

519 *wynde bringeþ*—wynd

brengeth

520 *wynde*—wynd

hyzt[e]—hihte

521 *reft*—MS. reſte, C. reft

ſeyne—ſeyn

522 *hyzt*—hihte

arcturus—MS. ariturus

523 *saw*—MS. ſaweþ, C.

sawgh

hey[e]—hyye

524 *hym*—hem

þere—ther

þing—thinge

525 *from*—fram

forleteþ hym of—forleſt-

heth þe werke of

527 *refuſeſt þou*—reſuſe-

eſtow

529 *to*—þinges—so grete

entrechaunginges of

thynges

531 *puniſſitȝ*—punyſſhe

wikked[e]—wykkede

532 *heize*—heere

treden *and* þat vnryztfully in þe nekkes of holy men. 533

¶ And vertue clere *and* schynnyng naturely is hid in dirke dirkenesses. *and* þe ryztful man berip þe blame *and* þe peyne of þe felowne. ¶ Ne þe forsweryng ne þe fraude couered *and* kembd wip a fals colour ne a-noyþ not to schrewea. ¶ þe whiche schrewea whan hem lyst to vsen her strengþe þei reioisen hem to putten vndir hem þe souerayne kynges. whiche þat

The wicked are prosperous, while the righteous are in adversity.

536

poeple wip[uten] noumbre dreden. ¶ O þou what so euer þou be þat knyttes[te] alle bondes of þinges loke on þise wrecched[e] erþes. we men þat ben nat a foule party but a faire party of so grete a werke we

O thou that bindest the disagreeing elements, look upon this wretched earth,

544

ben turmentid in þe see of fortune. ¶ þou gouernour wipdraw *and* restreyne þe rauyssinge flodes *and* fastne *and* forme þise erþes stable wip þhke [bonde] wip whiche þou gouernest þe heuene þat is so large.

and, as thou dost govern the spacious heavens, so let the earth be firmly bound.

HIC UBI CONTINUATO DOLORE.

Whan I hadde wip a continuel sorwe sobbed or broken out þise þinges sche wip hir chere peisible *and* no þing amouued. wip my compleyntes seide þus.

[The fythe prose.] Philosophy consoles Boethius.

551

whan I say þe *quod* sche sorweful *and* wepyng I wist[e] on-one þat þou were a wrecche *and* exiled. but I wist[e] neuer how fer þine exile was: 3if þi tale ne hadde schewed it to me. but certys al be þou fer fro þi

contre. þou nart * nat put out of it. but þou hast fayled of þi weye *and* gon amys. ¶ *and* yif þou hast

[fol. 7 b.]

leuer forto wene þan þou be put out of þi contre. þan hast þou put oute þi self raþer þen ony oper wyzt haþ.

She speaks to him of his country.

¶ For no wyzt but þi self ne myzt[e] neuer haue don

560

533 in—oon
534 *and*—omitted
536 Ne þe forsweryng—Ne forsweryng
537 kembd—MS. kembde, C. kembd
541 wip[uten]—withhout-yn
542 knyttes[te]—knyttest
543 wrecched[e]—wrecchede
544 a (2)—omitted

545 þe—this
546 wipdraw—MS. wip-drawe, C. withdraw
þe—thei
547 forme—ferme [bonde]—from C.
wip—by
550 broken—borken
552 wist[e]—wyste
553 on-one—anon
554 wist[e]—wyste

554 fer—ferre
555 ne hadde—nadde
557 gon—MS. gone, C. gon
558 leuer—leuere
558, 559 put—MS. putte, C. put
559 haþ—MS. hape
560 myzt[e]—myhte
haue—han
don—MS. done, C. don

- 561 *pat to þe.* ¶ For ȝif þou remembre of what contre þou
She reminds him
that he is a citi-
zen of a country
not governed by a
giddy multitude,
but eis goiparot
ἔστιν, εἰς
βασιλειᾷ. art born. it nis not gouerned by emperoures. ne by
gouernement of multitude. as weren þe contres of hem
of athenes. ¶ But o lorde *and* o kyng *and* *pat* is god
pat is lorde of þi contree. whiche *pat* reioiseþ hym of
566 þe dwellyng of hys Citezenis. *and* not forto putte hem
in exile. Of þe whiche lorde it is a souerayne fredom
to be gouerned by þe bridel of hym and obeie to his
iustice. ¶ Hast þou forȝeten þilke ryzt olde lawe of þi
570 Citee. in þe whiche Citee it is ordeyned *and* establissed
The Common-
wealth of Boe-
thius. *pat* what wyzt *pat* haþ leuer founden þer inne hys sete
or hys house. þen ellys where : he may not be exiled
573 by no ryzt fro *pat* place. ¶ For who so *pat* is contened
in-wip þe paleis [*and* the clos] of þilke Citee. þer nis
no drede *pat* he may deserue to ben exiled. ¶ But
who *pat* letteþ þe wille forto enhabit[e] þere. he for-
577 leteþ also to deserue to ben Citezein of þilke Citee.
Philosophy says
she is moved
more by the looks
of Boethius than
by his gloomy
prison. ¶ So *pat* I seye *pat* þe face of þis place ne amoeneþ me
nat so myche as þine owen face. Ne .I. ne axe not
raper þe walles of þi librarie apparailled *and* wrouȝt
wip yvory *and* wip glas þan after þe sete of þi pouȝt.
582 In whiche I putte nat somtyme bookes. but .I. putte
Books are to be
valued on account
of the thoughts
they contain. *pat* *pat* makeþ bookes worpi of pris or precious *pat* is
to sein þe sentence of my books. ¶ *And* certainly of
585 þi decertes by-stowed in commune good. þou hast seid
soþe but after þe multitude of þi goode dedys. þou hast
seid fewe. *and* of þe vnhonestee or falsnesse of þinges
588 *pat* ben opposed aȝeins þe. þou hast remembred þinges
Boethius has
rightfully and
briefly recounted
the frauds of his
accusers. *pat* ben knowe to alle folk. and of þe felonies *and*
fraudes of þine accusours. it semeþ þe haue I-touched
it forsoþe ryztfully *and* schortly. ¶ Al myȝten þo

563 *born*—MS. borne, C.
born
566 *hys*—hise
putte—put
568 *be*—ben
571 *haþ*—MS. haþe
573 *house*—hows
574 [*and*—*close*]*—*from C.

576 *wille*—wyl
enhabit[e]—enhabyte
578 *seye*—sey
amoeneþ—moueth
579 *myche*—mochel
owen—owne
ne (2)—omitted
582 *putte* (both)—put

582 *somtyme*—whilom
585 *decertes*—desertes
seid—MS. seide, C. seyde
586 *soþe*—sothi
587 *seid*—MS. seide, C. seyde
588 *opposed*—apowsyd
589 *knowe*—knowyn

same pinges bettere *and* more plentiuously be couth 592

in þe mouþe of þe poeple þat knoweþ al þis. ¶ þou

hast eke blamed gretly *and* compleyned of þe wrongful

dede of þe senat. ¶ And þou hast sorwed for my

blame. *and* þou hast wepen for þe damage of þi re-

nounne þat is appaired. *and* þi laste sorwe eschaufed 597

azeins fortune *and* compleineþ þat gerdouns ne ben not

euenliche ȝolde to þe desertes of folk. *and* in þe lattre

ende of þi woode muse þou priedest þat pilke pees þat

gouerneþ þe heuene scholde gouerne þe erþe ¶ But

for þat many tribulaciouns of affecciouns han assailed 602

þe. *and* sorwe *and* Ire *and* wepyng todrawn þee

dyuersely ¶ As þou art now feble of þouȝt. myȝtyer

remedies ne schullen not ȝit touchen þe for whiche

we wil[e] vsen somedel lyȝter medicines. So þat þilk[e]

passiouns þat ben woxen harde in swelling by per-

turbacioun folowyng in to þi þouȝt mowen woxe esy

and softe to receyuen þe strenkeþ of a more myȝty *and*

more egre medicine by an esier touchyng.

Thou hast, said
Philosophy, be-
wailed the loss
of thy good name,

thou hast com-
plained against
Fortune, and
against the
unequal distribu-
tion of rewards
and punishments.

Strong medicines
are not proper for
thee now, dis-
tracted by grief,
anger, and
sadness.

Light medicines
must prepare
thee for sharper
remedies.

610

OU M PHEBI RADIIS GRAUE CANCRI SIDUS ENESTUAT.

Whan þat þe heuy sterre of þe cancre eschaufed by
þe beme of phebus. þat is to seyne whan þat phebus

þe sonne is in þe signe of þe Cancere. Who so ȝeueþ

þan largely hys sedes to þe feldes þat refuse to re-

ceinen hem. lete hym gon bygyled of trust þat he

hadde to hys corn. to acorns or okes. yif þou wilt

gadre violettȝ. ne go þou not to þe purper wode whan

þe felde chirkyng agriseþ of colde by þe felnesse of

þe wynde þat hyȝt aquilon ¶ Yif þou desirest or 619

[The sixte
metar.]

He who sows his
seed when the
sun is in the
Sign of Cancer,
must look for no
produce.

Think not to in-
gather violets in
the wintry and
stormy season.

592 *be couth*—MS. be couthes,
C. ben couth
596 *wopen*—wopen
597 *laste*—last
598 *eschaufed*—eschaufede
599 *not*—omitted
600 *ȝolde*—yolden
602 *many*—manye
604 *myȝtyer*—myhtyere
606 *whiche*—which

606 *wil[e]*—wol
lyȝter—lyhtere
þilk[e]—þilke
607 *harde*—hard
608 *folowyng*—Flowyng
wore—wexen
610 *esier*—eysere
612 *beme*—beemes
seyne—seyn
614 *hyȝt*—hise

614 *refuse*—refusen
615 after *hem* C. adds [a.
corn]
lete hym gon (MS. *gone*)—
lat hym gon
616 *or*—of
wilt gadre—wolt gadery
618 *felde*—feld
felnesse—felnesses
619 *hyȝt*—hyhte

If you wish for
wine in autumn
let the tendrils of
the vine be free
in the spring.

wolt vsen grapes ne seke þou nat wiþ a glotonus hande
to streine *and* presse þe stalkes of þe vine in þe first
somer sesoun. for bachus þe god of wyne haþ rapen
623 zeuen his ziftes to autumpne þe latter ende of somer.

[* fol. 8.]
To every work
God assigns a
proper time,
nor suffers any-
thing to pass its
bounds.
Success does not
await him who
departs from the
appointed order
of things.

¶ God tokeniþ *and* assigneþ *þe tymes. ablyng hem
to her propre offices. ¶ Ne he ne suffreþ not stoundes
whiche þat hym self haþ deuided *and* constrained to
be medeled to gidre ¶ And forþi he þat forleteþ
certeyne ordinaunce of doynge by ouerprowyng wey.
he ne haþ no glade issue or ende of hys werkes.

PRIMUM IGITUR PATERIS ROGACIONIBUS.

[The syxte prose.]

Philosophy pre-
sents to question
Boethius.

Ffirst wolt þou suffre me to touche *and* assaie þe stat
of þi þouzt by a fewe demaundes. so þat I may
vnderstonde what be þe manere of þi curacioun. ¶ Axe

633 me *quod* .I. atte þi wille what þou wilt. *and* I schal
answere. ¶ þo saide sche þus. wheþer wenest þou *quod*

P. Is the world
governed by
Chance?

sche þat þis worlde be gouerned by foolissh happes

636 *and* fortunes. or elles wenest þou þat þer be in it any
gouernement of resoun. Certes *quod* .I. ne trowe not

B. By no means.
The Creator pre-
sides over his
own works.

in no manere þat so certeyne þinges scholde be moeued
by fortunouse fortune. but I wot wel þat god maker

640 *and* mayster is gouernour of þis werk. Ne neuer nas

I shall never
swerve from this
opinion.

3it day þat myzt[e] putte me oute of þe soþenesse of
þat sentence. ¶ So is it *quod* sche. for þe same þing

643 songe þou a lytel here byforne *and* byweyledest *and*
byweptest. þat only men weren put oute of þe cure of

P. Yes! Thou
didst say as much
when thou didst
declare man
alone to be
destitute of
divine care.
Still thou seemest
to labour under
some defect even
in this conviction.

god. ¶ For of alle oþer þinges þou ne douteest nat
þat þei nere gouerned by reson. but how (.i. pape.).

I wondre gretly certes whi þat þou art seek. siþen þou
art put in to so holesom a sentence. but lat vs seken

620 *hande*—hond
622 *hap*—MS. hape
625 *her propre*—hears pro-
pries
not—nat the
626 *hap*—MS. hape
627 *be medeled*—ben I-medled
628 *certeyne*—certeyn

629 *hap*—MS. hape
630 *wolt þou*—woltow
stat—estat
633 *atto*—at
will—wolt
635 *worlde*—world
foolissh—foolyssh
636 *fortunes*—fortunows

638 *scholde*—sholden
639 *wot*—MS. wote, C. woot
641 *myzt(e)*—myhte put
644 *put*—MS. putte
645 *doutest*—dowtdest
646 *how*—owh
647 *seek siþen*—ayke syn
648 *put*—MS. putte, C. put

depper. I coniecte þat þere lakkeþ I not what. but 649

sey me þis. siþen þat þou ne doutest nat þat þis worlde
be gouerned by god ¶ wiþ swycche gouernailes takest
pou hede þat it is gouerned. ¶ vnneþ quod .I. knowe 652

.I. þe sentence of þi questioun. so þat I ne may nat

þit answeren to þi demaundes. ¶ I nas nat deceiued
quod sche þat þere ne faileþ sumwhat. by whiche þe
maladie of perturbacioun is crept in to þi þouzt. so

as þe strengþe of þe paleys schynnyng is open. ¶ But
seye me þis remembreþ þou ouzt what is þe ende of
þi þinges. whider þat þe entencioun of al kynde tendeth.

¶ I haue herd told it somtyme quod .I. but drery- 660
nesso hap dilled my memoria. ¶ Certys quod sche
þou wost wel whennes þat alle þinges ben comen and 662

proceded. I wot wel quod .I. and answered[e] þat
god is þe bygynnyng of al. ¶ And how may þis be

quod sche þat siþen þou knowest þe bygynnyng of
þinges. þat þou ne knowest not what is þe endyng of
þinges. but swiche ben þe customes of perturbaciouns. 667

and þis power þei han. þat þei may moeue a man fro
hys place. þat is to seyne from þe stablenes and per-
feccioun of hys knowyng. but certys þei may not al
arace hym ne alyene hym in al. ¶ But I wolde þat 671

þou woldest answeren to þis. ¶ Remembreþ þou þat
þou art a man ¶ Boice. ¶ Whi scholde I nat remem-
bre þat quod .I. Philosophie. ¶ Maiste þou not telle
me þan quod sche what þing is a man. ¶ Axest not

me quod I whepir þat be a resonable best mortel. I
wot wel and I confesse wel þat I am it. ¶ Wistest

þou neuer þit þat þou were ony oþer þing quod she.

But it is the nature of these perturbacions (which thou endurest) to unsettle men's minds.

Doest thou remember that thou art a man? B. Certainly I do. P. What is man? B. If you ask me whether I am a rational and mortal creature, I know and confess I am.

P. But doest thou not know that thou art more than this?

649 depper—deppers
not what—not nere what

650 siþen—syn
worlde—world

651 takest þou—takestow

652 seye—sey
remembreþ þou — re-
membres thow

ouzt—omitted
659 al—alle

660 herd told—MS. herde
tolde

herd told it—herd yt toold

661 hap—MS. hape

663 proceded—procedeth
answered[e]—answered

664 þe—omitted
al—alle

665 siþen—syn
668 fro—owt of

669 seyne from—seyen fro

672 Remembreþ þou—Re-
menbrethow

674 Maiste þou—Maysthow

676 þan—þanne
þing—þinghe

Axest—Axestow

677 Wistest þou—wystest-
how

678 þing—þinghe

- B. No. No *quod* .I. now wot I *quod* she oþer cause of þi
 680 *maladie and þat ryȝt grete* ¶ þou hast left *forto*
 knowe þi self what þou art. þoruȝ whiche I haue pley-
 nelyche knowen þe cause of þi *maladie*. or ellis þe
 683 *entre of recoueryng of þin hele*. ¶ Forwhy for þou
 art confounded wiþ forȝetyng of þi self. forþi sorwest
 þou þat þou art exiled of þi *propre goodes*. ¶ And
 for þou ne wost what is þe ende of þinges. for[þi] *demest*
 [þou] þat felonous and wikked men ben myȝty and weleful
 for þou hast forȝeten by whiche *gouuernementȝ þe worlde*
 689 *is gouerned*. ¶ Forþi wenest þou þat þise *mutaciouns*
 of fortune fleten wiþ outen *gouernour*. þise ben grete
 causes not oonly to *maladie*. but certes grete causes to
 deep ¶ But I þanke þe auctour and þe makere of
 heele þat nature haþ not al forleten þe. and I haue
 694 g[r]ete norissinges of þi hele. and þat is þe soþe sen-
 tence of *gouernaunce of þe worlde*. þat þou byleuest
 þat þe *gouernynge of it nis nat subgit ne vnderput*
 to þe folie *of þise *happes auenterouses*. but to þe
 resoun of god ¶ And þer fore doute þe noþing. For
 of þis litel spark pine heet of lijf schal shine. ¶ But
 700 for as muche as it is not tyme ȝitte of fastere remedies
 ¶ And þe nature of þouȝtes disseiued is þis þat as ofte
 as þei casten awaye soþe opyniouns: þei cloþen hem in
 fals[e] opiniouns. [of whiche false opyniouns] þe derknesse
 of *perturbacioun wexeþ vp*. þat comfounded þe verray
 insyȝt. and þat derkenes schal .I. say somwhat to
 maken þinne and wayk by lyȝt and meenelyche re-
 medies. so þat after þat þe derknes of desseyuyng
 desyrynges is don away. þou mow[e] knowe þe schyn-
 yng of verray lyȝt.
- But as this is not the time for stronger remedies, and because it is natural to embrace false opinions so soon as we have laid aside the true, from whence arises a mist that darkens the understanding, I shall endeavour therefore to dissipate these vapours so that you may perceive the true light.
- 690 *hast left*—MS. haste
 lefte, C. hast left
 691 *knowe*—known
pleynelyche knowen —
 pleynly frownde [=
 founde]
 694 *sorwest þou*—sorwestow
 696 *for[þi] demest [þou]* —
 For thy demesthow
 687 *wikked*—MS. wilked, C.
- wykkyd
 688 *worlde*—world
 698 *wenest þou*—wencstow
 690 *outen*—owte
 693 *hap*—MS. hape
 al—alle
 694 *þi*—thin
 696 *vnderput*—vndyrputte
 697 *to* (2)—omitted
 698 *fore*—for
- 696 *noþing*—nothings
 699 *spark pine heet*—sparks
 700 *muche*—meche [thin hete
 702 *awaye*—away
 703 [of—opyniouns]—from
 706 *insyȝt*—insyhte [C.
 say—assaye
 706 *lyȝt*—lyhte
 708 *don*—MS. done
 mow[e]—mowo

NUBIBUS ATRIS CONDITA.

ÞE sterres couered wip blak[e] cloudes ne mowen
geten a doun no lyzt. 3if þe trouble wynde þat
hyzt auster stormyng *and* walwyng þe see medleþ þe
heete þat is to seyne þe boylyng vp from þe botme 713

[The seuende
Metyr.]
Black cloude
obscure the light
of the stars.

¶ þe wawes þat somtyme weren clere as glas *and*
lyke to þe fair[e] bryzt[e] dayes wipstant anon þe
syztes of men. by þe filþe *and* ordure þat is resolved.
and þe fletyng streme þat royleþ doun dyuersely fro
heyze mountaignes is arestid *and* resisted ofte tyme
by þe encountrynge of a stoon þat is departid *and* 719

If the south wind
renders the sea
tempestuous, the
waves, foiled
with mud, will
lose their glassy
clearness.

fallen from some roche. ¶ And forþi yif þou wilt
loken *and* demen soþe wip clere lyzt. *and* holde þe
weye wip a ryzt paþe. ¶ Weyue þou ioie. drif fro þe
drede. fleme þou hope. ne lat no sorwe aprocha. þat is
to sein lat noon of þise four passiouns ouer come þe.
or blynde þe. for cloudy *and* dirke is þilk þouzt *and*
bounde with bridles. where as þise pinges regnen. 726

If thou wouldst
see truth by the
clearest light,
pursue the path
of right.
Away with joy,
fear, hope, and
sorrow.
Let none of these
passions cloud
thy mind.
Where these
things control,
the soul is bound
by strong fetters.

EXPLICIT LIBER PRIMUS.

INCIPIT LIBER SECUNDUS.

POSTEA [PAU]LISPER CONTIGUIT.

After þis she stynte a litel. and after þat she hadde
gadred by atempre stillenesse myn attencioun she 728
seide þus. ¶ As who so myzt[e] seye þus. After þise
pinges she stynt[e] a lytel. *and* whanne she aper-
ceiued[e] by atempre stillenesse þat I was ententif to
herkene hire. she bygan to speke in þis wyse. ¶ Yif 732

[The fyrst prose.]

Philosophy ex-
horts Boethius
not to torment
himself on
account of his
losses.

710 blak[e]—blake
712 stormyng—turnyng
713 from—fro
714 somtyme—whilom
716 lyke—lyk
fair[e]—wipstant (MS.
wipstante)—fayre cleere
dayes *and* brikte with-
stand

716 syztes—syhtes
717 streme—strem
718 heyze—hy
720 from some—fram som
wilt—wolt
721 soþe—soth
clere—cleer
holde—holden
723 weye—wey

723 paþe—paath
724 come—comen
725 blynde—blende
þilk—thilke
727 she (2)—I
729 myzt[e] seye—myhte seyn
730 stynt[e]—stynthe
732 hire—here

- 733 I *quod* she haue vnderstonden *and* knowe vtterly þe
Thou art, she
says, affected by
the loss of thy
former fortune. causes *and* þe habit of þi maladie. þou languissed *and*
It hath perverted
thy faculties.
I am well ac-
quainted with all
the wiles of that
Prodigy (i. e.
Fortune). art deffeted for talent *and* desijr of þi rapier fortune.
- 736 ¶ She þat ilke fortune only þat is changed as þou
Though she has
left thee, thou
hast not lost any-
thing of beauty
or of worth. feinst to þe ward. haþ peruered þe clerenesse *and* þe
Thou wert once
proof against her
allurements. astat of þi corage. ¶ I vnderstonde þe felefolde
But sudden
change works a
great alteration
in the minds
of men, hence
it is that thou art
departed from
thy usual peace
of mind.
But with some
gentle emollients
I shall prepare
thee for stronger
medicines.
Approach then,
Rhetoric,
with thy per-
suasive charms,
and therewith let
Musie also draw
near. colour *and* deceites of pilke merueillous monstre for-
tune. and how she vseþ ful flatryng familiarite wip hem
- 741 þat she enforceþ to bygyle. so longe til þat she con-
founde wip vnsuffreable sorwe hem þat she haþ left
- 743 in despeir vnpurueyed. ¶ and if þou remembrest wel
þe kynde þe maners *and* þe desert of pilke fortune. þow
shalt wel knowe as in hir þou neuer ne haddest ne
hast ylost any fair þing. But as I trowe I shal not
- 747 gretly trauaile to don þe remembren of pise þinges.
Thou wert once
proof against her
allurements. ¶ For þou were wont to hurtlen [*and* despysen] hir
wip manly wordes whan she was blaundissinge *and*
presente *and* pursewedest hir wip sentences þat were
- 751 drawn oute of myne entre. þat is to seyne out of
myn informacioun ¶ But no sudeyne mutacioun ne
bytideþ nat wip outhen a maner chaungyng of curages.
and so is it byfallen þat þou art departed a litel fro
þe pees of þi þouzt. but now is tyme þat þou drynke
and atast[e] some softe *and* delitable þinges. so þat whan
þei ben entred wip inne þe. it mow make weye to
strenger drynkes of medycynes. ¶ Com nowe furþe
perfore þe suasioun of swetnesse Rethoryen. whiche
þat goþ onely þe ryzt wey whil she forsakeþ not myne
estatutz. ¶ And wip Rethorice com forþe musice a
- 762 damoiseil of oure house þat syngþ now lyzter moedes

733 knowe vtterly—known
owtrelly
734 languissed—languyasest
737 haþ—MS. haþe
738 astat—estat
felefolde—felefold
739 colour—colours
deceites (MS. decrites) —
deceytes
merueillous—meruayles
742 haþ—MS. haþe
743 if—yif

746 any (MS. my)—any
þing—thing
747 trauaile—travaylen
don—do
remembren of—remenbre
on
748 [*and* despysen]—from C.
749 was—omitted
750 were—weren
751 myne—myn
seyne—sayn
752 sudeyne—sodeyn

753 outhen—owte
757 inne—in
mow — weye — mowe
maken wey
758 stronger—strongere
Com nowe furþe — MS.
Come; C. Com now forth
760 goþ—MS. goþe
761 com—MS. come, C. com
762 house—hows
lyzter—lyhtere

or prolaciouns now heuyer. *what ayleþ þe man. what [* fol. 9.]
is it þat haþ cast þe in to murnyng *and* in to wepyng. 764
I trow[e] þat þou hast sen some newe þing *and* un-
coupe. ¶ þou wenest þat fortune be chaunged azeins
þe ¶ But þou wenest wrong. yif þou [þat] wene.
Alwey þo ben hire maners. she haþ raper [kept] as to
þe ward hire propre stablenes in þe chaungyng of hyre
self. ¶ Ryzt swyche was she whan she flatered[e]
þe. *and* desseined[e] þe wiþ vneueful lykynges of
false welefulnesse. þou hast now knowen *and* ataynt
þe doutous or double visage of pilke blynde goddesse
fortune. ¶ She þat zit couereþ hir *and* wympleþ hir
to oper folk. haþ shewed hir euerydel to þe. ¶ 3if
þou approuest hir *and* þenkest þat she is good. vse
hir maners *and* pleyne þe nat. ¶ And if þou agrisest
hir fals[e] trecherie. dispise *and* cast awaye hir þat
pleyep so harmefully. for she þat is now cause of so
myche sorwe to þe. sholde be to þe cause of pees *and*
[of] ioie. ¶ she haþ forsaken þe forsoþe. þe whiche
þat neuer man may be syker þat she ne shal forsake
hym. *Glose.* ¶ But napeles some bookes han þe text
þus. For soþe she haþ forsaken þe ne þer nis no man
syker þat she ne haþ not forsaken. ¶ Holdest þou
þan pilke welefulnesse preciose to þe þat shal passen.
and is present fortune derworþi to þe. whiche þat nis
not feiþful forto dwelle. *and* whan she goþ awaye þat
she bryngeþ a wyzt in sorwe ¶ For syn she may nat
be wiþholden at a mans wille. she makeþ hym a wrecche
when she departep fro hym. ¶ What oper þing is

Thou thinkest
that Fortune is
changed towards
thee.

But thou art
deceived.

In this misad-
venture of thine
she hath pre-
served her con-
stancy in
changing.

You have seen
the double face
of this blind
divinity.

If thou dost
abhor her perfidy
cast her off, for
her sports are
dangerous.

Is that happiness
which is so
transient?

Is the attendance
of Fortune so dear
to thee, whose
stay is so uncer-
tain, and whose
removal causes
such grief?

763 *prolacious* — probasy-
ons
heuyer — heuyere
ayleþ — cyleth
766 *trowe* — trowe
sen — MS. sene, C. seyn
some — som
þing — thinge
uncoupe — vnkowth
768 *azeins* — ayein
767 *wenest* — weenes
[þat] — C. that
768 *haþ* — MS. haþe
[kept] — from C.

769 *stabilnes* in þe — stabyl-
nesse standeth in the
770 *swyche* — swich
771 *vneueful* — vnefful
776 *haþ* — MS. had, C. hat
776 *good* — MS. goodde, C. god
777 *agrisest* — MS. agrised, C.
agrysyat
778 *fals[e]* — false
780 *myche* — mochel
781 [of] — from C.
haþ — MS. haþe
783 *text* — texte
784 *haþ* — MS. haþe

785 *forsoaken* — forsake
Holdest þou — holdestow
786 *þan* — thanne
preciose — presyes
787 *derworþi* — derworthe
whiche — which
788 *feiþful* — feythfull
goþ — MS. goþe
awaye — away
790 *mans* — mannys
791 *whan* — wan
þing — thinge

What is she
(Fortune) but the
presage of future
calamity?

Her mutability
should make men
neither fear her
threats nor desire
her favours.

If you submit to
her yoke you
must patiently
endure her
inflexions.

Impatience will
only embitter
your loss.

You cannot
choose your port
if you leave your
vessel to the
mercy of the
winds.

You have given
yourself up to
Fortune; it be-
comes you there-
fore to obey her
commands.

Would you stop
the rolling of her
wheel?

Fool! If Fortune
once became
stable she would
cease to exist.

793 *suffriþ*—suffiseth
794 *of þing*—on thyng
byþorne—MS. byforne by-
forne
man—a man
795 *measurþ*—amesureth
796 *from one*—fram oon
seyne—seyn
797 *fro*—from
to—into
799 *atte þe last*—at the laste

801 *seyne*—seyn
worlde—world
802 *Syþen*—Syn
þokke—yoke
803 *if*—yif
wryte—wryten
804 *whiche*—which
805 *lady*—ladye
Art þou—Artow
806 *wroþe*—wroth
þin—thine

807 *chaungen*—change
808 [*and*]*—*from C.
809 *þider*—thedyr
whider—whedyr
811 *haus*—hau
814 *manere*—maneres
815 *and*—omitted
wipstonden—withholden
816 *sweyes*—away
818 *cesed[e]*—cesede

fitting fortune but a manere shewyng of wrychednesse
þat is to comen. ne it ne suffriþ nat oo[n]ly to loken
794 of þing þat is present byforne þe eyen of man. but
wisdom lokeþ *and* mesureþ þe ende of þinges. *and* þe
796 same chaungyng from one to an oþer. þat is to seyne
fro aduersite to prosperite makeþ þat þe manaces of
fortune ne ben not forto dreden. ne þe flatrynges of
hir to ben desired. ¶ þus atte þe last it byhoueþ þe
to suffren wiþ euene wille in pacience al þat is don
801 inwiþ þe floor of fortune. þat is to seyne in þis worlde.
¶ Syþen þou hast oones put þi nekke vnder þe þokke
of hir. for if þou wilt write a lawe of wendyng *and* of
dwelliþg to fortune whiche þat þou hast chosen frely
805 to be þi lady ¶ Art þou nat wrongful in þat *and*
makest fortune wroþe *and* aspere by þin inpacience.
and ȝit þou mayst not chaungen hir. ¶ Yif þou com-
mittest [*and*] bitakest þi sayles to þe wynde. þou shalt
be shouen not þider þat þou woldest(:) but whider þat
þe wynde shoueþ þe ¶ Yif þou castest þi seedes in þe
811 feldeþ þou sholdest haue in mynde þat þe ȝeres ben
oþer while plenteuous *and* oþer while bareyne. ¶ þou
hast bytaken þiself to þe gouernaunce of fortune.
and forþi it byhoueþ þe to ben obeisaunt to þe manere
of þi lady. *and* enforcest þou þe to aresten or wiþ-
stonden þe swyftnesse *and* þe sweyes of hir tournyng
whele. ¶ O þou fool of alle mortel fooles if fortune
bygan to dwelle stable. she cesed[e] þan to ben fortune.

HEC CUM SUPERBA.

Whan fortune wip a proude ryzt hande hap turnid [The fyrst metar.
Fortune is as in-
constant as the
ebb and flow of
Eurippus.
822
is on one syde and somtyme on pat oper. *Texte* ¶ She
cruel fortune kastep adoune kynges pat somtyme weren
ydred. and she deceivable enhaunseth vp the humble
chere of hym pat is discomfited. and she neyther herep 826
ne reccheþ of wrecched[e] wepynges. and she is so harde
pat she lauzeþ and scorneþ þe wepyng of hem þe whiche
she hap makid wepe wip hir free wille. ¶ þus she
pleyeþ and þus she preueþ hir strengþe and sheweþ a
grete wondre to alle hir seruauztz. ¶ Yif þat a wyzt
is seyn weleful and ouerþrowe in an houre. 832

She huris kyngs
from their
thrones, and
exalts the cap-
tive.

She turns a deaf
ear to the tears
and cries of the
wretched.

Thus she sports
and boasts her
power and pre-
sents a marvel
to her servants
if, in the space of
an hour, a man is
hurled from
happiness into
adversity.

VELLEM AUTEM PAUCA.

(Ertis I wolde plete wip þee a fewe þinges vsynge [The secunde
prose.]
þe wordes of fortune tak heede now þi self. yif þat
she axeþ ryzt. * ¶ O þou man wher fore makest þou
me gilty by þine euerydayes pleyninges. what wronges
haue I don þe. what goodes haue I byrest þe þat weren
þine. stryf or plete wip me by fore what iuge þat þou
wilt of þe possessioun of rychesse or of dignites ¶ And
yif þou maist shewe me þat euer any mortal man hap
receyued any of þese þinges to ben his in propre. þan
wol I graunt[e] frely þat [alle] þilke þinges weren þine
whiche þat þou axest. ¶ Whan þat nature brouzt[e] þe
forþe out of þi moder wombe. I receyued[e] þe naked 840

Philosophy ex-
postulates with
[* fol. 9 b.]
Boethius in the
name of Fortune.
Why do you
accuse me (For-
tune) as guilty?
What goods or
advantages have
I deprived you
of?

Can you prove
that ever any
man had a fixed
property in his
riches?
You came naked
into the world,

819 *proude*—prowd
hande—hand
hap—MS. hape
820 *lyke*—lik
821 *arme*—arm
822 *streme*—stream
823 *one*—o
824 *adoune*—adown
somtyme—whilom
825 *ydred* (MS. *ydredde*)—
humble—vmbile [ydred
827 *reccheþ*—rekkeþ

827 *wrecched[e]*—wrecchede
harde—hard
828 *lauzeþ*—lysseth
wepyng—wepynges
830 *strengþe*—strengthes
833 *plete*—pleten
834 *tak*—MS. take, C. tak
835 *makest þou*—makes thow
836 *wronges*—wronge
837 *don*—MS. done, C. don
byrest—MS. byreste, C.
byrest

838 *stryf*—MS. stryue, C. stryf
plete—pleten
by fore—by forn
839 *wilt*—wolt
rychesse—rychcenes
840 *shewe*—shewyn
euer—euere
hap—MS. hape
841 *þese*—tho
his—hise
842 *graunt[e]*—graunte
[alle]—from C.

and I chertished
you

and nedy of al þing. and I norysshed[e] þe wiþ my
rychesse. and was redy und ententif þoruȝ my fauour to

847 sustene þe. ¶ And þat makeþ þe now inpatient azeins
me. and I enviournde þe wiþ al þe habundaunce and
shinyng of al goodes þat ben in my ryȝt. ¶ Now it
lykeþ me to wiþ drawe myne hande. þou hast had grace
as he þat haþ vsed of foreyne goodes. þou hast no ryȝt to
pleyne þe. as þouȝ þou haddest vtterly lorn alle þi

and encompassed
you with
affluence.
Now that I have
a mind to with-
draw my boun'y,
be thankful and
complain not.

853 þinges. whi pleyneȝt þou þan. I haue don þe no wrong.

Riches and
honours are sub-
ject to me.
They are my
servants, and
come and go with
me.

Riches honoures and swyche oþer þinges ben of my
ryȝt. ¶ My seruantes knowen me for hir lady. þei
comen wiþ me and departen whan I wende. I dar wel
afferme hardyly. þat yif þo þinges of whiche þou

858 pleyneȝt þat þou hast forlorn hadde ben þine. þou ne
haddest not lorn hem. ¶ shal I þan only be defended

Shall I alone be
forbidden to use
my own right?
Doth not heaven
give us sunny
days and obscure
the same with
dark nights?
Is not the earth
covered with
frost as well as
with flowers?

to vse my ryȝt. ¶ Certis it is leueful to þe heuene to
make clere dayes. and after þat to keuere þe same dayes
wiþ derke nyȝtes. ¶ þe erþe haþ eke leue to appaile
þe visage of þe erþe now with floures and now wiþ
fryt. and to confounde hem somtyme wiþ raynes and

865 wiþ coldes. ¶ þe see haþ eke hys ryȝt to be som-
tyme calme and blaundyshing wiþ smoþe water. and
somtyme to be horrible wiþ wawes and wiþ tempestes.
¶ But þe couetyse of men þat may not be staunched
shal it bynde me to be stedfast. syn þat stedfastnesse
is vnkouþ to my maneres. ¶ Swyche is my strengþe.

The sea some-
times appears
calm, and at
other times
terrifies us with
its tempestuous
waves.

Shall I be bound
to constancy by
the covetousness
of men?

871 and þis pley. I pley[e] continually. I tourne þe whirlyng
whele wiþ þe tournyng cercle ¶ I am glade to chaunge
þe lowest to þe heyeste. and þe heyest to þe loweste.

I turn my rolling
wheel and amuse
myself with
exalting what

845 *al þing*—alle thinges
norysshed[e]—noryssede
846 *rychesse*—rychessees
848, 849 *al*—alle
848 *habundaunce*—abound-
aunce
860 *wiþ*—hande—with-
drawen myn hand
had—MS. hadde, C. had
861 *haþ*—MS. haþe
862 *vtterly*—outrely
lorn—MS. lorne, C. for
lorn

863 *don*—MS. done, C. don
864 *Riches*—Rychessees
868 *forlorn*—MS. forlorne,
C. forlorn
869 *lorn*—MS. lorne, C. lorn
880 *esse*—vsen
861 *keuere þe*—coeueryn tho
862 *derke*—dirk
erþe—yer
haþ—MS. haþe
864 *confounde*—confownden
865 *haþ*—MS. haþe
866 *calme*—kalm

867 (2nd) *wiþ*—omitted
869 *stedfast*—stidefast
stedfastnesse—stidefast-
nesse
870 *vnkouþ*—MS. vnkouþe,
C. vnkowth
Swyche—Swych
871 *pley[e]*—pleye
872 *whole*—wheel
glade—glad
chaunge—chaungyn

worpe vp yif þou wilt. so it be by þis lawe. þat þou
ne holde not þat I do þe wronge þouȝ þou descende
doun whanne resoun of my pleye axeþ it. Wost þou
not how Cresus kyng of lyndens of whiche kyng Cirus
was ful sore agast a litel byforne þat þis rewlyche
Cresus was cauȝt of Cirus and lad to þe fjr to be
brent. but þat a reyne descended[e] doun from heuene
þat rescowed[e] hym ¶ And is it out of þi mynde how
þat Paulus consul of Rome whan he hadde take þe
kyng of perciens weep pitou[s]ly for þe captiuitie of þe
self[e] kyng. What oþer pinges bywaylen þe criinges of
Tragedies. but only þe dedes of fortune. þat wiþ an
vnwar stroke ouerturneuþ þe realmes of grete nobley
¶ *Glose.* Tragedie is to seyne a dite of a prosperite for
a tyme þat endiþ in wretchednesse. Leredest nat þou
in grek whan þou were ȝonge þat in þe entre or in þe
seler of Iuppiter þer ben couched two tunnes. þat on
is ful of good þat oþer is ful of harme. ¶ What ryȝt
hast þou to pleyne. yif þou hast taken more plenteuously
of þe goode syde þat is to seyne of my rycchesse and
prosperites. and what eke. yif I be nat departed fro þe.
What eke. yif my mutabilitie ȝiueþ þe ryȝtful cause of
hope to han ȝit better pinges. ¶ Naples desmaie þe
nat in þi þouȝt. and þou þat art put in comune realme
of alle: ne desir[e] nat to lyue by þine oonly propre ryȝt.

was low, and
bringing down
what was high.
Ascend if you
will, but come
down when my
sport requires it.

878
Know you not
the history of
Cresus and of
Paulus Æmilius?

883
What else does
the weeping
muse of Tragedy
deplore but the
overthrow of
kingdoms by
the indiscrimi-
nate strokes of
Fortune?
Did you not learn
whilst a youth,
that at the gates
of Jove's palace
stand two vessels,
one full of bless-
ings, the other of
woes?

894
What if you have
drunk too deep of
the first vessel?

My mutability
gives thee hope
of happier days.

Desire not to be
exempted from
the vicissitudes of
humanity.

SI QUANTAS RAPIDIS.

þouȝ plentee þat is goddesse of rycches hielde adoun
wiþ ful horn. and wiþdraweþ nat hir hand. ¶ As
many recches as þe see turneþ vpwardes sandes whan it

[the secunde
meter.]
Though Plenty,
from her teeming
horn, poured
down as many

874 worþe—worth
wilt—wolt
876 down—adoun
whanne—wan
pleye—play
Wost þou—wistesthow
877 kyng (1)—the kyng
lyndens—lydyens
878 byforne—byforn
880 reyne descended[e]—

rayn descendede
880 from—fro
881 rescowed[e]—rescowede
882 take—takyn
886 an—a
888 þe—omitted
887 seyne—seyn
890 tunnes—tonnes
891 harme—harm
892 hast þou—hasthow

893 seyne—seyn
rycchesse—rychesses
894 I be nat—I ne be nat al
896 better—betere
898 lyue—lyuen
þine—thin
899 rycches—rychesses
901 recches—rychesses
epwardes—vpward

riches on the
world as there
are sands on the
sea-shore, or
stars in heaven,
mankind would
not cease to com-
plain.
[* fol. 10.]

is moeued wiþ rauysshing blastes. or ellys as many
rycches as þer shynen bryzt[e] sterres on heuene on þe
sterry nyzt. 3it for al þat mankynde nolde not cese to
wope wrecched[e] pleyntes. ¶ And al be it so *þat
906 god receyueþ gladly her prayers and 3eueþ hem as ful
large muche golde and apparaileþ coueytous folk wiþ
noble or clere honours. 3it semeþ hem haue I-gete no-
ping. but alwey her cruel ravyne deuourynge al þat þei
910 han geten shewiþ oþer gapinges. þat is to seye gapen
and desiren 3it after moo rycchesse. ¶ What brideles
myzten wiþholde to any certeyne ende þe desordene
coueitise of men ¶ Whan euere þe rapier þat it fletip in
large 3iftis: þe more ay brenneþ in hem þe þrest of
hauyng. ¶ Certis he þat quakyng and dredeful wenep
916 hym seluen nedy. he ne lyueþ neuere-mo ryche.

Though Heaven
may grant
every desire, they
will still cry for
more.

What rein can
restrain unbound-
ed avarice?

He who thinks
himself poor,
though he be
rich, doth truly
labour under
poverty.

HIS IGITUR SI PRO SE.

[The thrydde
prose.]

If Fortune spake
thus to you, you
could not defend
your complaint.

B. What you
have said is very
specious, but
such discourses
are only sweet
while they strike
our ears.
They cannot
efface the deep
impressions that
misery has made
in the heart.

þerfore yif þat fortune spake wiþ þe for hir self in
þis manere. For soþe þou ne haddest [nat] what
þou myztest answer. and if þou hast any þing wher-
wiþ. þou mayist ryztfully tellen þi compleynt. ¶ It
921 byhoueþ þe to shewen it. and .I. wol 3eue þe space to
tellen it. ¶ Certeynely quod I þan þise ben faire
þinges and enoyntid wiþ hony swetnesse of rethorike
and musike. and only while þei ben herd þei ben de-
licieuse. ¶ But to wrecches is a deppere felyng of
harma. þis is to seyn þat wrecches felen þe harmes þat
þei suffren more greuously þan þe remedies or þe delites
928 of þise wordes mowe gladen or comforten hem. so þat

902 *rauysshing*—rauymynge
903 *rycches*—rychesses
904 *bryzt[e]*—bryhte
on (l)—in
904 *nyzt*—nyltes
905 *wope wrecched[e]*—wepe
wrecchede
906 *her*—hir
906 *ful*—fool
907 *muche*—meche
907 *folk*—men

908 *haue*—hauen
908 *I-gete*—I-getyn
908 *her*—hir
910 *seyn*—seyn
911 *rychesses*—rychesses
912 *wiþholde*—wytholden
912 *certeyne*—certeyn
914 *þrest*—thurst
915 *dredeful*—dredful
916 *lyueþ*—leueth
918 *[nat]*—from C.

918 *if*—yif
920 *mayist*—mayst
920 *tellen*—defendyn
921 *þou*—yeuyn
922 *þan*—thanne
922 *ben*—bet (= beth)
923 *swetnesse*—swetnesse
924 *while*—whil
924 *herd*—MS. herde
926 *harma*—harin
928 *mowe*—mowen

whan þise þinges stynten forto soun[e] in eres. þe sorwe 929

þat is inset greueþ þe þouȝt. Ryȝt so is it *quod* she.

¶ For þise ne ben ȝit none remedies of þi maladie. but

þei ben a manere norissinges of þi sorwe ȝit rebel

azeyne þi curacioun. ¶ For whan þat tyme is. I shal

moue swiche þinges þat percen hem self depe. ¶ But

napeles þat þou shalt not wilne to leten þi self a

wrecche. ¶ Hast þou forȝeten þe noumbre *and* þe

manere of þi welefulnesse. I holde me stille how þat

þe souerayn men of þe Citee token þe in cure *and*

kepyng whan þou were orphelyn of fadir *and* modir.

and were chosen in affinite of princes of þe Citee.

¶ And þou bygunne rapen to ben leef *and* deere þan 941

forto ben a neȝbour. þe whiche þing is þe most pre-

ciouse kynde of any propinquitee or aliaunce þat may

ben. ¶ Who is it þat ne seide þou nere ryȝt weleful 944

wiþ so grete a nobley of þi fadres in lawe. ¶ *And* wiþ

þe chastite of þi wiȝf. *and* wiþ þe oportunitie *and*

noblesse of þi masculyn children. þat is to seyne þi

sones *and* ouer al þis me lyst to passe of comune þinges. 948

¶ How þou haddest in þi þouȝt dignitees þat weren

warned to olde men. but it deliteþ me to comen now to

þe singuler vphepyng of þi welefulnesse. ¶ Yif any

fruyt of mortal þinges may han any weȝȝte or price of 952

welefulnesse. ¶ Myȝtest þou euere forȝeten for any

charge of harme þat myȝt[e] byfallen. þe remembraunce

of þilke day þat þou sey[e] þi two sones maked con-

seillers. *and* ylad to gidre from þin house vndir so gret

assemble of senatours. *and* vndir þe blypenesse of poeple. 957

and whan þou say[e] hem sette in þe court in her

P. So it is indeed; for my arguments are not designed as remedies, but as lenitives only.

When time serves, I will administer those things that shall reach the seat of your disease. But you are not among the number of the wretched. I shall not speak of your happiness in being provided for (in your orphanage) by the chief men of the city;

nor of your noble alliance with Festus and Symmachus;

nor of your virtuous wife, and manly sons.

Can you ever forget the memorable day that saw your two sons invested with the dignity of Consuls?

929 soun[e]—sowne
930 inset—MS. insette, C.
inset
932 sorwe—sorwes
933 azeyne—ayein
934 moue swiche—moue
swych
938 souerayn—souerane
942 neȝbour—neyshebour
944 nere—were

945 nobley—nobleye
fadres—fadyr-is
947 seyne—seyn
948 lyst—lyste
passe of—passen the
949 þouȝt—ȝowthe
950 warned—werned
952 fruyt—frute
price—pris
953 Myȝtest þou—myhtes-

thow
954 harme—harm
myȝt[e] byfallen—myhte
befalle
955 sey[e]—saye
956 from—fro
gret—MS. grete, C. gret
958 say[e]—saye
sette—set
her—heere

When in the
circus you satis-
fied the ex-
pectant multi-
tude with a
triumphal
largesse?

chaires of dignites. ¶ pou rethorien or pronouncere
of kynges preysinges. deseruedest glorie of wit and of
eloquence. whan pou sitting bytwix pi two sones con-
seillers in þe place þat hyzt Circo. and fulfildest þe

963 abydyng of multitude of poeple þat was sprad about þe
wip large praysynge and laude as men syngen in vic-
tories. þo 3aue pou wordes of fortune as I trowe. þat
is to seyne. þo feffedest pou fortune wip glosynge
wordes and desseinedest hir. whan she accoied[e] þe
and norsshed[e] þe as hir owen delices. ¶ pou hast

969 had of fortune a zifte þat is to seyn swiche gerdoun
þat she neu[er]e 3af to proue man ¶ Wilt pou perfore
leye a rekenyng wip fortune. she hap now twynkeled
first vpon þe wip a wykked eye. ¶ Yif pou considere
þe noubre and þe manere of pi blysses. and of pi
sorwes. *pou maist nat forsake þat pou nart zit blysfyl.
For if pou perfore wenest pi self nat weleful for þinges

By your expres-
sions you
flattered Fortune,
and obtained
from her a gift
which never be-
fore fell to any
private person.

Will you there-
fore call Fortune
to account?
She now begins,
I own, to look
unkindly on you;
but if you con-
sider the number
of your blessings,
[* fol. 10 b.]
you must confess
that you are still
happy.

These evils that
you suffer are but
transitory.

976 þat þo semeden ioyful ben passed. ¶ þer nis nat whi
pou sholdest wene pi self a wrecche. for þinges þat now
semen soory passen also. ¶ Art pou now comen firste

979 a sodeyne gest in to þe shadowe or tabernacle of þis
lijf. or trowest pou þat any stedfastnesse be in mannis
þinges. ¶ Whan ofte a swifte houre dissolueth þe same
man. þat is to seyne whan þe soule departiþ fro þe
body. For al þou3 þat yelde is þer any feiþ þat for-
tunous þinges willen dwelle. zit napeles þe last[e] day
of a mannis lijf is a manere deep to fortune. and also
to pilke þat hap dwelt. and perfore what wenist pou
þar recche yif pou forlete hir in deyng or ellys þat she
fortune forlete þe in fleenge away.

Can there be any
stability in
human affairs,
when the life of
man is exposed to
dissolution every
hour?

The last day of
life puts an end
to Prosperity.

What matters it
then, whether
you by death
leave it, or it
(Fortune) by
flight doth leave
you?

961 bytwix-bytween
962 hyzt-hihte
963 of (1)-of the
about-abowten
964 wip-with so
965 3aue-MS. þan, C. 3aue
of-to
966 seyne-seyn
967 accoied[e]-accoyede
968 norsshed[e]-noryssede
owen-owne
þou — of — thow bar
away of

969 had-MS. hadde
swiche-swich
970 proue-pryue
971 leye-lye
hap-MS. hape
972 wykked-wyckede
973 blysses-blysse
974 forsake-forsakyn
nart-art
blysfyl-blyseful
975 soory-sorye
firste-fyrst
976 sodeyne-sodeyn

979 shadowe-shadwe
980 stedfastnesse-stedefast-
981 swifte-swyft (nesse
dissolueth-dyssoluede
983 al þou3 þat — al þat
thowgh
fortunous-fortune
984 willen dwelle — wolen
last[e]-laste [dwellyn
986 hap-MS. hape
wenist þou — weenestow
987 þar recche-dar recche
988 away-away

CUM PRIMO POLO.

Whan phebus þe sonne bygynneþ to spreden his clere-nesse with rosene chariettes. þan þe sterre ydimmyd paleþ hir white cheres. by þe flamus of þe sonne þat ouer comeþ þe sterre lyzt. ¶ Þis is to seyn whan þe sonne is risen þe day sterre wexiþ pale and lesiþ hir 993 lyzt for þe grete bryztnesse of þe sonne. ¶ Whan þe wode wexeþ redy of rosene floures in þe first somer sesoun þoruþ þe breþe of þe wynde Zephirus þat wexeþ warme. ¶ Yif þe cloudy wynde auster blowe felliche. 997 þan goþ away þe fayrnesse of þornes. Ofte þe see is clere and calme wipoute moeuynge floodes. And ofte þe horrible wynde aquilon moeueþ boylyng tempestes and ouer whelweþ þe see. ¶ Yif þe forme of þis worlde is so [zeelde] stable. and yif it tourniþ by so many entrechaungynges. wilt þou þan trusten in þe trublynge fortunes of men. wilt þou trowen in flittyng goodes. 1004 It is certeyne and establissed by lawe perdurable þat no þing þat is engendred nys stedfast no stable.

[The .iiij. Metw.]

The stars pale before the light of the rising sun.

Westerly winds deck the wood with roses, but easterly winds cause their beauty to fade.

Now the sea is calm, and again it is tempestuous.

If all things thus vary, will you trust in transitory riches?

All here below is unstedfast and unstable.

TUNC EGO UERA INQUAM.

þ Anne seide I þus. O norice of alle uertues þou seist ful soþe. ¶ Ne I may nat forsake þe ryzt[e] swifte cours of my prosperitee. þat is to seine. þat prosperitee ne be comen to me wondir swiftly and soone. but þis is a þing þat gretly smertiþ me whan it remembreþ me. ¶ For in alle aduersitees of fortune þe most vnseely kynde of contrariouse fortune is to han ben weleful. ¶ But þat þou quod she abaist þus þe tourment of þi fals[e] opinioun þat maist þou not ryzt-

[The forth prose.]

B. I cannot deny my sudden and early prosperity.

It is the remembrance of former happiness that adds most to man's infelicity.

P. Recollect that you have yet much affluence.

989 his—hyr
990 þan—thanne
991 flamus—flambes
996 redy—rody
rosene—rosyn
997 warme—warm
998 goþ—MS. goþe, C. goth
fayrnesse—fayrenesse
999 clere—cleer
calme—kalm

1000 wynde—wynd
1001 whelweþ—welueeth
1002 [zeelde]—from C.
1003, 1004 wilt þou—wiltow
1003 þan—thanne
trublynge—towmblynge
1004 in flittyng—ou flet-
1006 It is—is it [tyuge
1006 no—ne
stable—estable

1008 soþe—soth
Ne I may—Ne I ne may
1009 seine—seyn
1011 a—omitted
gretly—gretely
1012 aduersitees—aduersyte
1013 most—mooste
1014 abaist—abyest
1015 tourment—t riment
fals[e]—false

fully blamen ne aretten to pinges. as who seip for þou hast zitte many habundaunces of pinges. ¶ *Textus.*

1018 For al be it so þat þe ydel name of auenterouse welefulnesse moeueþ þe now. it is leueful þat þou rekene with me of how many[e] pinges þou hast zit plente. ¶ And perfore yif þat pilke ping þat þou haddest for most precious in alle þi rycchesse of fortune be kept

What you esteemed most precious in your happy days, you still retain,

1023 to þe by þe grace of god vnwemmed *and* vndefouled. Mayst þou þan pleyne ryztfully vpon þe myschief of fortune. syn þou hast zit þi best[e] pinges. ¶ Certys zit

and ought therefore not to complain.

1026 lyueþ in goode poynt pilke precious honour of mankynde. ¶ Symachus þi wyues fadir whiche þat is a man maked al of sapience *and* of vertue. þe whiche

Symmachus, dear to you as life,

1029 man þou woldest b[i]en redely wiþ þe pris of þin owen lijf. he byweyleþ þe wronges þat men don to þee. *and* not for hym self. for he liueþ in sykernesse of any

is safe and in health.

sentence put azeins hym. ¶ And zit lyueþ þi wif þat is attempre of witte *and* passyng oþer women in clennes of chastitee. and for I wol closen shortly her bountes she is lyke to hir fadir. I telle þe welle þat she lyueþ loop of hir life. *and* kepþ to þee oonly hir goost. *and* is al maat *and* ouer-comen by wepyng *and* sorwe for

Your wife Rusticana is also alive,

1034 desire of þe ¶ In þe whiche ping only I mot graunten þat þi welefulnesse is amenused. ¶ What shal I seyn eke of þi two sones conseilours of whiche as of children of hir age þer shineþ *þe lyknesse of þe witte of hir fadir *and* of hir eldefadir. and siþen þe souereyn cure of alle mortel folke is to sauen hir owen lyues. ¶ O how weleful art þou þouþ þou knowe þi goodes.

Why need I mention your two sons, in whom so much of the wit

[* fol. 11.] and spirit of their sire and grand-sire doth shine?

And since it is the chief care of man to preserve life; you are still

1016 *seip*—MS. *seipe*, C. *seyh*

1017 *zitte*—yit

1019 *leueful*—leofful

1020 *many[e]* pinges—manye grete thinges

1022 *alle*—al

1023 *þe by*—the yit by

1024 *myschief*—meschef

1025 *best[e]*—beste

1026 *lyueþ*—leueth

goode—good

1027 *whiche*—which

1028 *al*—alle

1028 *of* (2)—omitted

1029 *o[']ion*—hyen

ouen—owne

1030 *byweyleþ*—bewayleth

don—MS. done, C. don

1031 *liueþ*—leueth

1032 *witte*—wyt

women—wymmen

1034 *shortly*—shortely

1035 *lyke*—lik

welle—wel

1036 *hir life*—this lyf

1037 *maat*—maad

1038 *whiche*—weche

1039 *amenused*—amenysed

seyn—(MS. *seyne*) seyn

1041 *lyknesse*—lykenesse

witte—wyt

1042 *and* (1)—or

eldefadir—eldyr fadyr

siþen—syn

1043 *folke*—folk

1044 *art þou þouþ*—arthow yif

¶ But zitte ben þer þinges dwellyng to þe wardes þat no man douteþ þat þei ne ben more derworþe to þe þen þine owen lijf. ¶ And forþi drie þi teres for zitte nys nat eueriche fortune al hateful to þe warde. ne ouer greet tempest haþ nat ȝit fallen vpon þe. whan þat þin ancrez cliue fast[e] þat neiþer wole suffre þe comfort of þis tyme present. ne þe hope of tyme comynge to passen ne to fallen. ¶ And I preie quod I þat fast[e] mot[en] þei holden. ¶ For whiles þat þei halden. how so euere þat þinges ben. I shal wel fleten furþe and eschapen. ¶ But þou mayst wel seen how greet[e] apparailes and aray þat me lakkeþ þat ben passed away fro me. ¶ I haue sumwhat auauuced and forpered þe quod she. if þat þou anoie nat or forþenke nat of al þi fortune. As who seip. ¶ I haue somewhat comforted þe so þat þou tempest nat þe þus wiþ al þi fortune. syn þou hast ȝit þi best[e] þinges. ¶ But I may nat suffre þin delices. þat pleinst so wepyng. and anguissous for þat oper lakkeþ somewhat to þi welefulnesse. ¶ For what man is so sad or of so perfit welefulnesse. þat he ne stryueþ or pleyneþ on some half aȝeine þe qualitee of his estat. ¶ For whi ful anguissous þing is þe condicioun of mans goodes. ¶ For eyþer it comeþ al to gidre to a wyȝt. or ellys it lasteþ not perpetuely. ¶ For som man haþ grete rycchesse. but he is ashamed of hys vngentil lynage. and som man is renomed of noblesse of kynrede. but he is enclosed in so grete angre for nede of þinges. þat hym were leuer þat he were vnknowe. and som man habundeþ boþe in rycchesse and noblesse. but ȝit he bywaileþ hys chast[e]

most happy in the possession of blessings which all men value more than life. Dry up thy tears, thou hast still present comfort and hope of future felicity.

1050

B. I hope these will never fail me.

1054

But do you not see how low I am fallen?

P. I should think that I had made progress if you did not repine so at your fate.

It grieves me to hear you complain while you possess so many comforts.

1062

Every one, however happy, has something to complain of.

1065

The condition of human enjoyment is anxious; for either it comes not all at once, or makes no long stay when it does come.

One man is very wealthy, but his birth is obscure.

Another is conspicuous for nobility of descent, but is surrounded by indigence.

A third is blest with both ad-

1045 But zitte—for yit
dwellyng—dwellyd
wardes—ward
1046 þat—than
derworþe—dereworthe
þen þine—than thin
1047 zitte—yit
1049 haþ—MS. haþe
þin—thyne
1050 cliue fast[e]—cleuen
faste
wole suffre—wolen suffren

1052 fallen—faylen
1053 fast[e] mot[en]—faste
moten
1053 holden—halden
1054 furþe—forth
1055 mayst—mayste
greet[e]—grete
1058 forþenke—forthinke
1061 best[e]—beste
suffre þin—suffren thi
1063 oper—ther
1064 perfit—parfyt

1065 or—and
some half aȝeine—som
halue aȝen
1067 mane—mannes
comeþ al—comth nat al
1068 lasteþ—last
perpetuely—perpetue
1069 rycchesse—Rychesse
1070 renomed—renowned
1072 angre for—Angwysse
leuer—leuere [cf
1074 chast[e]—caste

vantages, but is unmarried.
This man is happy in a wife, but is childless, while that other man has the joy of children, but is mortified by their evil ways.
Thus we see that no man can agree easily with the state of his fortune.

lijf. for he haþ no wijf. ¶ and som man is wel and selily married but he haþ no children. and norissheþ his richesse to þe heires of straunge folk. ¶ And som man is gladded wiþ children. but he wepiþ ful sory for þe trespas of his son or of his douztir. ¶ and for þis þer accordeþ no wyzt lyztly to þe condicioun of his fortune. for alwey to euery man þere is in mest somewhat

1082 þat vnassaiþ he ne wot not or ellys he dredip þat he haþ assaiþ. ¶ And adde þis also þat euery weleful man haþ a wel delicat felyng. ¶ So þat but yif alle þinges fallen at hys owen wille for he impacient or is nat vsed to han none aduersitee. an-oone he is þrowe

adoüne for euery lytel ping. ¶ And ful lytel þinges ben þo þat wiþdrawen þe somme or þe perfeccioun of blisfulnesse fro hem þat ben most fortunat. ¶ How many men trowest þou wolde demen hem self to ben almost in heuene yif þei myzten atteyne to þe leest[e] partie of þe remenaunt of þi fortune. ¶ þis same place þat þou clepist exil is contre to hem þat enhabiten here. and forþi. Noþing wrecched. but whan þou wenest it ¶ As who seiþ. þou3 þi self ne no wyzt ellys nys no wrecche but whan he wenep hym self a

The happiness of the most fortunate depends on trifles.

1089 How many would think themselves in heaven if they had only a part of the remnant of thy fortune! Thy miseries proceed from the thought that thou art miserable. Every lot may be happy to the man who bears his condition with equanimity and courage.

1097 wrecche by reputacioun of his corage.

CONTRAQUE.

1098 When patience is lost then a change of state is desired.

And azeinewarde al fortune is blisful to a man by þe agreablete or by þe egalite of hym þat suffreþ it. ¶ What man is þat. þat is so weleful þat nolde chaungen his estat whan he haþ lorn pacience. þe swetnesse of

1102 mannes welefulnesse is yspranid wiþ many[e] bitteresses.

1075, 1076 *hap*—MS. *habe*
1076 *married*—ymaryed
his—hise
1077 *richesses*—Rychesses
heires—eyres
folk—foolkys
1080 *þer*—þer ne
1081 *mest*—omitted
1082 *vnassaiþ*—vnassaid
wot—MS. *wote*, C. *wot*

1083, 1084 *hap*—MS. *habe*
1084 *wel*—ful
1085 *fallen*—byfalle
wille—wyl
1086 *none*—non
an-oone—Anon
þrowe—throwen
1087 *adoüne*—adoun
1080 *wolde*—wolden
1085 *it*—hyt

1085 *who*—ho
1086 *no*—a
1088 *azeinewarde al*—ayeinward alle
1089 *it*—hyt
1101 *whan*—what
hap—MS. *habe*
lorn—MS. *lorne*, C. *lost*
1102 *yspranid*—spraynyd
bitteresses—beternesses

þe whiche welefulnesse al þouȝ it seme swete *and*
ioyeful to hym þat vseþ it. ȝit may it not be wiþ-holden
þat it ne goþ away whan it wol. ¶ þan is it wel sen
how wrecched is þe blisfulnesse of mortel þinges. þat
neiþer it dwelliþ perpetual wiþ hem þat euery fortune
receyuen agreablye or egaly. ¶ Ne it ne deliteþ not in
al. to hem þat ben anguissous. ¶ O ye mortel folkes
what seke *ȝe þan blisfulnesse oute of ȝoure self. whiche
þat is put in ȝoure self. *Errour and folie confoundeþ*
ȝow ¶ I shal shewe þe shortly. þe poynt of souereyne
blisfulnesse. Is þer any þing to þe more precieuse þan
þi self ¶ þou wilt answey nay. ¶ þan if it so be þat
þou art myȝty ouer þi self þat is to seyn by tranquillitee
of þi soule. þan hast þou þing in þi power þat þou
noldest neuer lesen. ne fortune may nat by-nyme it þe.
and þat þou mayst knowe þat blisfulnesse [ne] may
nat standen in þinges þat ben fortounous *and* tem-
perel. ¶ Now vndirstonde *and* gadir it to gidir þus
yif blisfulnesse be þe souereyne goode of nature þat
liueþ by resoun ¶ Ne pilke þing nis nat souereyne
goode þat may be taken away in any wyse. for more
worpi þing *and* more digne is pilke þing þat may nat be
taken away. ¶ þan shewiþ it wele þat þe vnstable-
nesse of fortune may nat attayne to receyue verray
blisfulnes. ¶ And ȝit more ouer. ¶ What man þat
þis tounblyng welefulnesse leediþ. eiþer he woot þat
[it] is chaungeable. or ellis he woot it nat. ¶ And yif
he woot it not. what blisful fortune may þer be in þe
blyndenesse of ignoraunce. and yif he woot þat it is
chaungeable. he mot alwey ben adrad þat he ne lese
þat þing. þat he ne douteþ nat but þat he may leesen

How much is
human felicity
embittered!

It will not stay
with those that
endure their lot
with equanimity,
nor bring com-
fort to anxious
minds.

1109

Why then, O
[* fol. 11 b.]
mortals, do ye
seek abroad for
that felicity
which is to be
found within
yourselves?

Nothing is more
precious than
thyself.

If thou hast com-
mand over thy-
self, Fortune can-
not deprive thee
of it.

1117

Happiness does
not consist in
things transitory.

1121

If happiness be
the supreme good
of nature, then
that thing can-
not be it which
can be withdrawn
from us.

Instability of
fortune is not
susceptive of true
happiness.

He who is led by
fading felicity,
either knows
that it is change-
able or does not
know it.

If he knows it
not, what happi-
ness has he in the
blindness of his
ignorance?

If he knows it is
fleeting he must
be afraid of losing

1104 *hym*—hem
it—hyt
be—ben
1105 *goþ*—MS. goþe
sew—woole
sen—MS. sene
1107 *dwelliþ*—dureth
1109 *folkes*—folke
1110 *oute*—owt

1113 *shortly*—shortely
1114 *wilt*—MS. wilte, C. wolt
if—yif
1117 *by-nyme*—be-neme
1118 *blisfulnesse* [ne] —
blyssfulnesse ne
1120 *to gidir*—to gidere
1121, 1123 *souereyne goode*—
souereyn good

1125 *welo*—wel
1126 *receyue*—receyuen
1129 [*if*]—from C.
it—hyt
1130 *be*—ben
1131 *blyndenesse* — blynd-
nesse

it, and this fear
will not suffer
him to be happy.

1136 it. ¶ As whoo seip he mot ben alwey agast lest he
leese þat he wot wel he may leese. ¶ For whiche þe
continuel drede þat he haþ ne suffriþ hym nat to ben
weleful. ¶ Or ellys yif he leese it he wene to be
dispised *and* forleten hit. ¶ Certis eke þat is a ful
lytel goode þat is born wiþ euene hert[e] whan it is
1140 loost. ¶ þat is to seyne þat men don no more force.

Since thou art
convinced of the
soul's im-
mortality, thou
canst not doubt
that if death puts
an end to human
felicity, that all
men when they
die, are plunged
into the depths of
misery.

of þe lost þan of þe hauyng. ¶ And for as myche as
þou þi self art he to whom it haþ ben shewid *and* proued
by ful many[e] demonstraciouns. as I woot wel þat þe
soules of men ne mowen nat dien in no wise. and eke
syn it is clere. *and* certeyne þat fortunous welefulnesse
endip by þe deep of þe body. ¶ It may nat ben doutid

1147 þat yif þat deep may take away blysfulnesse þat al þe
kynde of mortal þingus ne descendip in to wrecched-
nesse by þe ende of þe deep. ¶ And syn we knowen
wel þat many a man haþ souzt þe fruit of blisfulnesse
nat only wiþ suffryng of deep. but eke wiþ suffryng of
peynes *and* tourmentes. how my3t[e] þan þis present
lijf make men blisful. syn þat whanne þilke self[e]
lijf is endid. it ne makeþ folk no wrecches.

But we know that
many have
sought to obtain
felicity,
by undergoing
not only death,
but pains and
torments.
How then can
this present life
make men truly
happy, since
when it is ended
they do not be-
come miserable?

* MS. uolet.

QUISQUIS VOLET* PERHENNEM CAUTUS.

[The farther
metur.]

He who would
have a stable and
lasting seat must
not build upon
lofty hills; nor
upon the sands,
if he would escape
the violence of
winds and waves.

What maner man stable *and* war þat wil founden hym
a perdurable sete *and* ne wil not be cast doune
wiþ þe loude blastes of þe wynde Eurus. *and* wil dispise
þe see manassyng wiþ floodes ¶ Lat hym eschewe to
bilde on þe cop of þe mountayngne. or in þe moyste
sandes. ¶ For þe fel[le] wynde auster tourmentep þe cop
1160 of þe mountayngne wiþ alle his strengþes. ¶ *and* þe

1134 *it*—hyt
seip—MS. seipe, C. seyth
1136 wot—MS. wote, C. wot
leese (2)—leese it
whiche—whiche
1136 *haþ*—MS. haþe
1137 *ellys*—omitted
wene—weneþ
1138 *hit*—omitted
1139 goode—good
borne—MS. borne, C. born
hert[e]—herte

1140 *seyne*—seyn
don—MS. done, C. do
force—fors
1142 *haþ*—MS. haþe
1143 *many[e]*—manye
1144 *mowen*—mowe
dien—dyeen
1145 *clere*—cleer
certeyne—certeyn
1147 *al*—alle
1150 *haþ*—MS. haþe
fruit—fruit

1152 *my3t[e]*—myhte
1153 *make*—maken
self[e]—selue
1155, 1156, 1157 *seil*—wole
1156 *be cast*—MS. be caste,
C. ben cast
1157 *wynde*—wynd
1158 *eschewe*—eschewen
1160 *fel[le]*—felle
1161 *his*—hise

lowe see sandes refuse to beren þe heuy weyȝte. *and* 1162
 forþi yif þou wolt flee þe perilous auenture þat is to
 seine of þe worlde ¶ Hauē mynde certeynly to ficchyn
 þi house of a myrie site in a lowe stooone. ¶ For al
 þouȝ þe wynde troublȝng þe see þondre wiþ ouere-
 þrowynges ¶ þou þat art put in quiete *and* welful by
 strengþe of þi palys shalt leden a cleer age. scornȝng
 þe wodenesses *and* þe Ires of þe eir. 1169

If thou wilt flee
 perilous fortune,
 lay thy foundation
 upon the
 firmer stone, so
 that thou mayst
 grow old in thy
 stronghold.

SET CUM RACIONUM IAM IN TE.

But for as moche as þe noryssinges of my resouns [The tyfthe prose.]
 descenden now in to þe. I trowe it were tyme to
 vsen a litel strengre medicynes. ¶ Now vndirstonde
 here al were it so þat þe ȝiftis of fortune nar[e] nat
 brutel ne transitoria. what is þer in hem þat may be
 pine *in any tyme. or ellis þat it nys foule if þat it be
 considered *and* lokid perfitely. ¶ Richesse ben þei
 preciose by þe nature of hem self. or ellys by þe
 nature of þe. What is most worþi of rychesse. is it
 nat golde or myȝt of moneye assembled. ¶ Certis
 pilke golde *and* pilke moneye shineþ *and* ȝeuþ better
 renoun to hem þat dispenden it. þen to pilke folke þat
 mokeren it. For auarice makeþ alwey mokeres to be
 hated. *and* largesse makeþ folke clere of renoun
 ¶ For syn þat swiche þing as is transfered from o
 man to an oþer ne may nat dwellen wiþ no man. 1185
 Certis þan is pilke moneye precious. whan it is trans-
 lated in to oþer folk. *and* stynted to ben had by
 vsage of large ȝeuȝng of hym þat haþ ȝeuēn it. *and*
 also yif al þe moneye þat is ouer-al in þe world were

It is now time to
 use stronger medi-
 cines, since
 lighter remedies
 have taken effect.
 What is there in
 the gifts of For-
 tune that is not
 vile and despic-
 able? (* fol. 12.)

Are riches
 precious in them-
 selves, or in men's
 estimation?

What is most
 precious in them,
 quantity or
 quality?

Bounty is more
 glorious than
 niggardliness.

Avarice is always
 hateful, while
 liberality is
 praise-worthy.

Money cannot be
 more precious
 than when it is
 dispensed liber-
 ally to others.

If one man's cof-
 fers contained all

1162 *lowe*—lavoe
see—omitted
refuse—refusen
weyȝte—wyhte
1163 *flee*—fleen
1164 *seine*—seyen
1165 *þi*—thin
lowe stooone—lowh stoon
1167 *welful*—wefeful
1169 *wodenesses*—wood-

nesses
1173 *stronger*—strengers
undirstonde—vndyrstond
1173 *nar[e]*—ne weere
1174 *be pine*—ben thyn
1175 *foule*—fowl
1176 *Richesse*—Rychessis
1178 *rychesse*—rychessis
1179, 1180 *golde*—gold
1180 *better*—betere

1181 *þen*—thanne
1182 *mokeres*—mokereres
1183 *folke clere*—folk cler
1184 *swiche*—swich
from—fram
1187 *stynted*—stenttoth
1188 *haþ*—MS. haþe
1189 *world*—worlda

the money in the world, every one else would be in want of it.

1192 Riches cannot be dispensed without diminution.

O the poverty of riches, that cannot be enjoyed by many at the same time, nor can be possessed by one without impoverishing others!

The beauty of precious stones consists only in their brightness, wherefore I marvel that men admire that which is motionless, lifeless, and irrational.

Precious stones are indeed the workmanship of the Creator, but their beauty is infinitely below the excellency of man's nature.

Doth the beauty of the field delight thee?
B. Why should it not? for it is a beautiful part of a beautiful whole.

Hence, we admire the face of the sea, the heavens,

gadered towar[d] o man. it sholde maken al oþer men to ben nedy as of þat. ¶ And certys a voys al hool

þat is to seyn wiþ-oute amenusynge fulfilleþ to gyder þe heryng of myche folke. but Certys þoure rycchesse ne mowen nat passen vnto myche folk wiþ-oute amen-

ussyng ¶ And whan þei ben apassed. nedys þei maken hem pore þat forgon þe rycchesse. ¶ O streite and nedy clepe I þise rycchesse. syn þat many folke [ne] may nat han it al. ne al may it nat comen to on man wiþ-oute pouerte of al oþer folke. ¶ And þe shynynge

of gemmes þat I clepe precieuse stones. draweþ it nat þe eyen of folk in to hem warde. þat is to seyne for þe beaute. ¶ For certys yif þer were beaute or bounte in shynyng of stones. þilke clerenesse is of þe stones hem self. and nat of men. ¶ For whiche I wondre gretly þat men merueilen on swiche þinges. ¶ For whi what þing is it þat yif it wanteþ moeuynge and

ioynture of soule and body þat by ryȝt myȝt[e] semen a faire creature to hym þat haþ a soule of resoun.

¶ For al be it so þat gemmes drawn to hem self a litel of þe laste beaute of þe worlde. þoruȝ þe entent of hir creatour and þoruȝ þe distinccioun of hem self. ȝit for as myche as þei ben put vnder þoure excellence.

1213 þei han not desserued by no weye þat ȝe shullen merueylen on hem. ¶ And þe beaute of feeldes deliteþ

it nat mychel vnto ȝow. Boyce. ¶ Whi sholde it nat deliten vs. syn þat it is a ryȝt fayr porcioun of þe ryȝt fair werk. þat is to seyn of þis worlde. ¶ And ryȝt

so ben we gladed somtyme of þe face of þe see whan it is clere. And also merueylen we on þe heuene and

1190 al—alle
1191 al hool—omitted
1193 myche folke—moche folke
rychesse—rychesse
1194 myche—moche
1196 forgon—MS. forgone
1197 þise—this
rychesse—rychesse
[ne]—from C.
1198 on—o
1199 wiþ-oute—with-outen

1199 al—alle
folke—folke
1200 precieuse—precious
1201 in—omitted
wards—ward
seyn—seyn
1202 beaute (1)—beantes
For—but
1203 in—in the
1204 whiche—which
1207 ioynture—ioynture
1208 faire—fayr

1208 haþ—MS. haþe
1210 laste—last
worlde—world
1212 myche—moche
1213 desserued—MS. des-
seyued, C. desseruyd
weye—wey
shullen—sholden
1215 mychel—moche
1217 fair werk—fayr werke
worlde—world
1219 clere—cler

on þe sterres. *and* on þe sonne. *and* on þe mone.
Philosophie. ¶ Apperteineþ quod she any of pilke
 pinges to þe. whi darst þou glorifie þe in þe shynynge
 of any swiche pinges. Art þou distingwed *and* em-
 belised by þe spryngyng floures of þe first somer
 sesoun. or swellip þi plente in fruytes of somer. whi
 art þou rauyshed wip ydel ioies. why enbracest þou
 straunge goodes as þei weren þine. Fortune shal neuer
 maken þat swiche pinges ben þine þat nature of pinges
 maked foreyne fro þe. ¶ Syche is þat wip-uten
 doute þe fruytes of þe erþe owen to ben on þe
 norssinge of bestes. ¶ And if þou wilt fulfille þi
 nede after þat it suffiseþ to nature þan is it no nede
 þat þou seke after þe superfluite of fortune. ¶ For
 wip ful fewe pinges *and* with ful lytel þing nature
 halt hire appaied. *and* yif þou wilt achoken þe ful-
 fillyng of nature wip superfluites ¶ Certys pilke
 pinges þat þou wilt þresten or pouren in to nature
 shullen ben vniocysful to þe or ellis anoies. ¶ Wenest
 þou eke þat it be a fair þinge to shine wip dyuerse
 cloping. of whiche cloping yif þe beaute be agreable
 to loken vpon. I wol merueylen on þe nature of þe
 matere of pilke clopes. or ellys on þe werkeman þat
 wrouzt[e] hem. but al so a longe route of meyne. makip
 þat a blisful *man. þe whiche seruauentes yif þei ben
 viciouȝ of condiciouns it is a greet charge *and* a de-
 struccion to þe house. *and* a greet enmye to þe lorde
 hym self ¶ And yif þei ben goode men how shal
 straung[e] or foreyne goodenes ben put in þe noumbre
 of þi rycchesse. so þat by alle þise forseide pinges. it is
 clerly shewed þat neuer none of pilke pinges þat þou
 accoumptedest for þin goodes nas nat þi goode. ¶ In
 þe whiche pinges yif þer be no beaute to ben desired.

as well as the sun,
 moon, and stars.
 P. Do these things
 concern thee?
 darst thou glory
 in them?

1223

Do the flowers
 adorn you with
 their variety?
 Why embracest
 thou things
 wherein thou hast
 no property?

Fortune can never
 make that thine
 which the nature
 of things forbids
 to be so.

The fruits of the
 earth are designed
 for the support
 of beasts.

If you seek only
 the necessities of
 nature, the afflu-
 ence of Fortune
 will be useless.

Nature is content
 with a little, and
 superfluity will
 be both disagree-
 able and harmful.

1236

Does it add to a
 man's worth to
 shine in variety
 of costly clothing?
 The things really
 to be admired are
 the beauty of the
 stuff or the work-
 manship of it.
 Doth a great
 retinue make thee
 happy?

If thy servants be
 vicious, they are
 [c. fol. 12 b.]
 a great burden to
 the house, and
 pernicious eno-
 mies to the mas-
 ter of it.

If they be good,
 why should the
 probity of others
 be put to thy
 account?

Upon the whole,
 then, none of
 those enjoyments
 which thou didst
 consider as thy
 own did ever
 properly belong
 to thee.

1223 *darst þou glorifie* —
 darsthow gloryfien
 1225 *in* — in the
 1229 *Syche* — Soth
 1230 *ow* — to
 1231, 1235, 1237 *wilt* — wolt

1238 *shullen* — shollen
 1239 *fair* — fayre
 1240 *whiche* — which
 1242 *werkeman* — werkman
 1246 *house* — hows
 lorde — lord

1248 *goodenes* — goodnesse
 1250 *shewyd* — I-shewyd
 none — oon
 1251 *þin* — thine
 goode — good

If they be not desirable, why shouldst thou grieve for the loss of them? If they are fair by nature, what is that to thee? They would be equally agreeable whether thine or not. They are not to be reckoned precious because they are counted amongst thy goods, but because they seemed so before thou didst desire to possess them. What, then, is it we so clamorously demand of Fortune? Is it to drive away indigence by abundance? But the very reverse of this happens, for there is need of many helps to keep a variety of valuable goods. 1268

They want most things who have the most. They want the fewest who measure their abundance by the necessities of nature, and not by the superfluity of their desires. Is there no good planted within ourselves, that we are obliged to go abroad to seek it? Are things so changed and inverted, that god-like man should think that he has no other worth but what he derives from the possession of inanimate objects? Inferior things are satisfied with their own endowments, while man (the image of God) seeks to adorn his nature

whi sholdest þou be sory yif þou leese hem. or whi sholdest þou reioysen þe to holden hem. ¶ For if þei ben fair of hire owen kynde. what apperteneþ þat to þe. for as wel sholde þei han ben faire by hem self. þouȝ þei weren departid from alle þin rycchesse. ¶ For why faire ne precious ne weren þei nat. for þat þei comen amonges þi rycchesse. but for þei semeden fair and precious. þerfore þou haddeþ leuer rekene hem amonges þi rycchesse. but what desirest þou of fortune wiþ so greet a noyse and wiþ so greet a fare ¶ I trowe þou seke to dryue away nede wiþ habundaunce of þinges. ¶ But certys it turneþ to ȝow al in þe contrarie. for whi certys it nedieþ of ful many[e] helpynges to kepen þe dyuersite of preciouſe ostelmentȝ. and soþe it is þat of many[e] þinges han þei nede þat many[e] þinges han. and aȝeyneward of litel nedieþ hem þat mesuren hir fille after þe nede of kynde and nat after þe outrage of couetyse ¶ Is it þan so þat ye men ne han no propre goode. I-set in ȝow. For whiche ȝe moten seken outwarde ȝoure goodes in foreine and subgit þinges. ¶ So is þan þe condicioun of þinges turned vpso doun. þat a man þat is a de-vyne beest by merit of hys resoun. pinkeþ þat hym self nys neyþer fair ne noble. but if it be þoruȝ possessioun of ostelmentes. þat ne han no soules. ¶ And certys al oþer þinges ben appaied of hire owen beautes. but ȝe men þat ben semblable to god by ȝoure resonable þouȝt desiren to apparaille ȝoure excellent kynde of þe lowest[e] þinges. ne ȝe ne vndirstonde nat how gret a wrong ȝe don to ȝoure creatour. for he wolde þat man kynde were moost worpi and noble of

1255 fair—fayre
hire owen—hir owne
1266 sholde—sholden
self—selus
1267 þis rycchesse—thyne
rychesse
1259 amonges—amonge
1260, 1261 rycchesse—Rych-

cesse
1259 fair—fayre
1260 leuer rekene—leuer
rekne
1262 greet (2)—grete
1265, 1267 many[e]—manye
1267 soþe—soth
1272 outwarde—outward

1276 fair—fayre
if—yif
1278 hire owen—hir owne
1281 ne (2)—omitted
vndirstonde—vndyrstond-
yn
1282 gret—MS. grete, C. gret

any oþer erþely þinges. and 3e þresten adoun 3oure dignitees by-neþen þe lowest[e] þinges. ¶ For if þat al þe good of euery þing be more preciouſe þan is þilk þing whos þat þe good is. syn 3e demen þat þe foulest[e] þinges ben 3oure goodes. þanne summytten 3e and putten 3oure self vndir þo foulest[e] þinges by 3oure estimacioun. ¶ And certis þis bitidiþ nat wiþ out 3oure desert. For certys swiche is þe condicioun of al man kynde þat oonly whan it haþ knowyng of it self. þan passeþ it in noblesse alle oþer þinges. and whan it forletip þe knowyng of it self. þan it is brouzt byneþen alle beestes. ¶ For-why alle oþer [leuyng] beestes han of kynde to knowe not hem self. but whan þat men leten þe knowyng of hem self. it comeþ hem of vice. but how brode sheweþ þe errour and þe folie of 3ow men þat wenen þat ony þing may ben apparailled wiþ straunge apparaillement; ¶ but for-soþe þat may nat be don. for yif a wyȝt shyneþ wiþ þinges þat ben put to hym. as þus. yif þilke þinges shynen wiþ whiche a man is apparailled. ¶ Certis þilke þinges ben commendid and preised wiþ whiche he is apparailled. ¶ But napeles þe þing þat is couered and wrapped vndir þat dwelleþ in his filþe. and I denye þat þilke þing be good þat anoyeþ hym þat haþ it. ¶ Gabbe I of þis. þou wolt seye nay. ¶ Certys rycchesse han anoyed ful ofte hem þat han þe rycchesse. ¶ Syn þat euery wicked shrew and for hys wickednesse þe more gredy aftir oþer folkes rycchesse wher so euer it be in any place. be it golde or

with things infinitely below him, not understanding how much he dishonours his Maker. God intended man to excel all earthly creatures, yet you debase your dignity and prerogative below the lowest beings. In placing your happiness in despicable trifles, you acknowledge yourselves of less value than these trifles, and well do you merit to be so esteemed. Man only excels other creatures when he knows himself. When he ceases to do so, he sinks below beasts.

1297

Ignorance is natural to beasts, but in men it is unnatural and criminal.

How weak an error is it to believe that anything foreign to your nature can be an ornament to it. If a thing appear beautiful on account of its external embellishments, we admire and praise those embellishments alone. The thing covered still continues in its natural impurity.

I deny that to be a good which is hurtful to its owner.

Am I deceived in this? You will say no; for riches have often hurt their possessors.

Every wicked man desires

1284 oþer erþely — oothre wordly
þresten — threste
1285 by-neþen — by-nethe
if — yif
1286 good — MS. goode, C.
good
þing — thinge
precious — preȝos
þilk þing — þilke thinge
1287 þe (2) — tho
1288 summytten — submitten
1289 self — seluen

1289 foulest[e] — fowleste
1290 bitidiþ — tydeth
1291 out — owte
desert — desertes
1292 al — alle
1293 self — selue
1294 it is — is it
1295 [leuyng] — from C.
hem — hym
1297 þat — omitted
1298 comeþ — comth
1299 þing — thinge
1302 put — MS. putte, C. put

1303 whiche — which
1306 flþe — felthe
1307 þing — thinge
good — MS. goode, C. good
1308 hap — MS. haþe
1309 rycchesse — Rychesses
þe — tho
1310 rycchesse — Rychesses
shrewe — shrewe
1311 rycchesse — rycchesses
1312 golde — gold

[* fol. 13.]
another's wealth,
and esteems him
alone happy who
is in possession
of riches.
You, therefore,
who now so much
dread the instru-
ments of assassin-
ation, if you had
been born a poor
wayfaring man,
might, with an
empty purse,
have sung in the
face of robbers.
O the transcen-
dent felicity of
riches! No
sooner have you
obtained them,
than you cease to
be secure.

precious stones. *and* wenip hym *only most worpi þat
hap hem ¶ þou þan þat so besy dredest now þe swerde
and þe spere. yif þou haddest entred in þe pape of þis
lijf a voide wayfaryng man. þan woldest þou syng[e]
byfore þe poef. ¶ As who seip a poure man þat bereþ
no rycchesse on hym by þe weye. may boldly syng[e]
byforne þeues. for he hap nat wher-of to ben robbed.
¶ O preciouise *and* ryzt clere is þe blysfulnesse of
mortal rycchesse. þat whan þou hast geten it. þan hast
þou lorn þi syke[r]nesse.

FELIX IN MIRUM PRIOR ETAS.

[The fifth
metr.]

Happy was the
first age of men.
They were con-
tented with what
the faithful earth
produced.
With acorns they
satisfied their
hunger.
They knew not
Hycoras nor
Hydromel.

They did not dye
the Serian fleece
in Tyrian purple.

Blysful was þe first age of men. þei helden hem
apaied wiþ þe metes þat þe trewe erþes brouzten
furþe. ¶ þei ne destroyed[e] ne desceyued[e] not hem
self wiþ outeage. ¶ þei weren wont lyztly to slaken
her hunger at euene wiþ acornes of okes ¶ þei ne
coupe nat medle þe gift of bacus to þe clere hony.
þat is to seyn. þei coupe make no piment of clarre.
ne þei coupe nat medle þe brizt[e] flies of þe contre
of siriens wiþ þe venym of tirie. þis is to seyne. þei
coupe nat dien white flies of sirien contre wiþ þe
blode of a manar shellysshe. þat men fynden in tyrie.
wiþ whiche blode men deien purper. ¶ þei slepen
holesom slepes vpon þe gras. and dronken of þe ryn-
nyng watres. *and* laien vndir þe shadowe of þe heyze
pyne trees. ¶ Ne no gest ne no straunger [ne] karf
jit þa heye see wiþ coores or wiþ shippes. ne þei ne

They slept upon
the grass, and
drank of the
running stream,
and reclined
under the shadow
of the tall pine.
No man yet
ploughed the deep,
nor did the mer-
chant traffick with
foreign shores.

1314 hap—MS. habe, C. hat
besy—hyssy
swerde—sward
1315 pape—paath
1316 wayfaryng—wayferynge
syng[e]—synge
1317 byfore—by-for
seip—MS. seipe, C. seyth
poure—pore
bereþ—berth
1318 boldly syng[e]—boldely
synge
1319 hap—MS. habe
1320 preciouise—precyos
clere—cler
1321 rycchesse—rychesses

1322 lorn—MS. lorne, C. lorn
1324 erþes—feeldes
1325 furþe—forth
destroyed[e]—dystroyede
1327 her—hyr
at—MS. as, C. at
euene—euen
1328 coupe—cowde
medle—medly
gift—yifte
clere—cleer
1329 coupe—cowde
of—nor
1330 coupe—cowde
brizt[e]fles—bryhte fleeces
1331 siriens—Seryens

1331 seyne—seyn
1332 coupe—cowde
dien—deyen
fies—feyen
1333 blode—blood
shellysshe—shyllefysch
1334 blode—blood
1335 holesom—holosom
rynnnyng watres—renu-
nyng watres
shadowe—shadwes
heyze—heye
1337 synge—pyn
no (2)—omitted
[ne]—from C.
karf—karue

hadden seyne zitte none newe strondes to leden mer- 1339
chaundyse in to dyuerse contres. ¶ þo weren þe cruel
clariouns ful whist *and* ful stille. ne blode yshed by
egre hate ne hadde nat deied zit armurers. for wherto
or whiche woodenesse of enmys wolde first moeuen
armes. whan þei seien cruel woundes ne none medes
ben of blood yshad ¶ I wolde þat oure tymes sholde
turne azeine to þe oolde maneres. ¶ But þe anguissous
loue of hauyng brennep in folke moore cruely þan þe
fijr of þe Mountaigne of Ethna þat euer brennep.
¶ Allas what was he þat first dalf vp þe gobets or
þe weyztys of gold couered vndir erþe. *and* þe precious
stones þat wolden han ben hid. he dalf vp precious
perils. þat is to seyne þat he þat hem first vp dalf. he
dalf vp a precious peril. for-whi. for þe preciousnesse
of swyche hap many man ben in peril.

The warlike trumpet was hushed and still. Bloodahed had not yet arisen through hateful quarrels. Nothing could stimulate their rage to engage in war, when they saw that wounds and scars were the only needs. O that those days would come again! The thirst of wealth torments all; it rages more fiercely than Etna's fire. Cursed be the wretch who first brought gold to light.

1352

It has since proved perilous to many a man.

QUID AUTEM DE DIGNITATIBUS ET CETERA.

But what shal I seyne of dignitees *and* of powers.
þe whiche [ye] men þat neiþer knowen verray dig-
nitee ne verray power areysen hem as heye as þe
heuene. þe whiche dignitees *and* powers yif þei come
to any wicked man þei don [as] greet[e] damages *and*
distruccioun as dop þe flamme of þe Mountaigne
Ethna whan þe flamme wit walwip vp ne no deluge
ne dop so cruel harmes. ¶ Certys ye remembriþ wel
as I trowe þat pilke dignitee þat men clepiþ þe em-
perie of consulers þe whiche þat somtyme was by-
gynnyng of freedom. ¶ þoure eldres coueiteden to han
don a-wey þat dignitee for þe pride of þe conseilers.

[The sixte prose.] But why should I discourse of dignities and powers which (though you are ignorant of true honour and real power) you extol to the skies? When they fall to the lot of a wicked man, they produce greater calamities than the flaming eruption of Etna, or the most impetuous deluge. You remember that your ancestors desired to abolish the Consular government (the commencement of the Roman liberty),

1339 *hadden seyne zitte*—
hadde seyn yit
1341 *whist*—hust
blode yshed—blod I-shad
1343 *whiche woodenesse*—
whych wodnesse
1344 *seien*—say
1346 *turne azeine*—torne
azein
1347 *folke*—folk
1348 *þe*—omitted

1348 *ouer—ay*
1351 *hid*—MS. hidde, C. hydd
1353 *seyne*—seyn
he (S)—omitted
1364 *swyche*—swych thinge
hap—MS. hape
ben—be
1365 *seyne*—seye
1368 *come*—comen
1369 *don*—MS. done, C. don
[as] *greet[e]*—as grete

1360 *distruccioun*—destruc-
ciouns
dop—MS. dope, C. doth
flamme—flamme
1361 *flamme*—flawmbe
wit—omitted
1363 *dop*—MS. dope, C. doth
1363 *clepiþ*—clepyrn
1364 *whiche*—whych
somtyme—whilom
1366 *for*—MS. of, C. for

because of the
pride of the
Consuls; as their
ancestors before
for the same
consideration
had suppressed
the title of King.

¶ And ryȝt for þe same pride ȝoure eldres byforne þat
tyme hadden don away out of þe Citee of rome þe
kynges name. þat is to seien. þei nolden haue no
lenger no kyng ¶ But now yif so be þat dignitees

Virtue is not
embellished by
dignities, but
dignities derive
honour from
virtue.
But what is this
power, so much
celebrated and
desired?
What are they
over whom you
exercise au-
thority?

1371 *and* powers ben ȝeuen to goode men. þe whiche þing
is ful ȝelde. what agreable þinges is þer in þo dignitees.
or powers. but only þe goodenes of folk þat vsen hem.
¶ And perfore it is þus þat honour ne comeþ nat to
vertue for cause of dignite. but aȝeinward. honour
comeþ to dignite by cause of vertue. but whiche is
ȝoure derworþe power þat is so clere *and* so requerable

If thou sawest a
mouse assuming
(* fol. 13 b.)
command over
other mice,
wouldest thou not
almost burst with
laughter?

1378 ¶ O ȝe erþelyche bestes considere ȝe nat ouer whiche
þing þat it semeþ þat ȝe han power. ¶ Now yif þou
say[e] a mouse amongus *oper myse þat chalenged[e] to
hymself ward ryȝt *and* power ouer alle oper myse. how
gret scorne woldest þou han of hit. ¶ *Glosa.* ¶ So
fareþ it by men. þe body haþ power ouer þe body.

What is more
feeble than man,
to whom the bite
of a fly may be
the cause of
death?

1383 For yif þow loke wel vpon þe body of a wyȝt what
þing shalt þou fynde moore frele þan is mannes kynde.
þe whiche ben ful ofte slayn wiþ bytyng of smale

But how can any
man obtain dom-
inion over
another, unless
it be over his
body, or, what is
inferior to his
body,—over his
possessions, the
gifts of Fortune?
Can you ever
command a free-
born soul?
Can you disturb
a soul consistent
with itself, and
knit together by
the bond of
reason?

1387 flies. or ellys wiþ þe entryng of crepyng wormes in to
þe priuetees of mennes bodyes. ¶ But wher shal
men fynden any man þat may exercen or haunten any
ryȝt vpon an oper man but oonly vpon hys body. or
ellys vpon þinges þat ben lower þen þe body. whiche
I clepe fortunous possessiouns ¶ Mayst þou euer haue
any comaundement ouer a fre corage ¶ Mayst þou
remuen fro þe estat of hys propre reste. a þouȝt þat is
cleuyng to gider in hym self by stedfast resoun. ¶ As
somytyme a tiraunt wende to confounde a freman of

1368 *don*—MS. done, C. don
1369 *seien*—seyn
1370 *lenger*—leugere
kyng—kyuge
1371 *whiche*—which
1373 *folk*—foolkys
1374 *comeþ*—comth
1375, 1376 *vertue*—vertu
1376 *comeþ*—comth
by—for
whiche—which

1377 *derworþe*—dereworthe
clere—cleer
1378 *whiche*—which
1379 *han*—MS. hanne, C.
han
1380 *say[e]*—saye
mouse amongus—mou
amonges
myse—mus;
1382 *scorne*—scorn
1383 *haþ*—MS. haþo

1385 *manne*—man
1386 *þe*—*slayn*—the
whiche men wel ofte
ben slayn
1388 *mennes bodyes*—manne
body
1391 *lower*—lowere
whiche—the which
1395 *stedfast*—stidefast
1396 *somytyme*—whyloun

corage ¶ And wende to constreyne hym by tourment 1397
to maken hym dyscoueren *and* acusen folk pat wisten
of a coniuracioun. whiche I clepe a confederacie pat
was cast azeins þis tyraunt ¶ But þis free man boot
of hys owen tunge. *and* cast it in þe visage of pilke
woode tyraunte. ¶ So pat þe tourment; pat þis
tyraunt wende to han maket matere of cruelte. þis 1403
wyse man maket[e it] matere of vertues. ¶ But what
þing is it pat a man may don to an oper man. pat he
ne may receyue þe same þing of oper folke in hym
self. or þus. ¶ What may a man don to folk. pat folk 1407
ne may don hym þe same. ¶ I haue herd told of
busirides pat was wont to sleen hys gestes pat her-
burghden in hys hous. and he was slayn hym self of
ercules pat was hys gest ¶ Regulus had[de] taken in
bataile many men of affrike. and cast hem in to fet-
teres. but sone after he most[e] ȝiue hys handes to
ben bounden *with* þe cheynes of hem pat he had[de]
somtyme ouercomen. ¶ Wenest þou þan pat he be
myȝty. pat may nat don a þing. pat oper ne may don
hym. pat he dop to oper. *and* ȝit more ouer yif it so
were pat þise dignites or poweres hadden any propre
or naturel goodnesse in hem self neuer nolden þei
comen to shrewes. ¶ For contrarious þinges ne ben
not wont to ben yfelawshipped togidres. ¶ Nature re-
fuseþ pat contra[r]ious þinges ben yioigned. ¶ And so 1422
as I am in certeyne pat ryȝt wikked folk han dignitees
ofte tymes. þan sheweþ it wel pat dignitees *and* powers
ne ben not goode of hir owen kynde. syn pat þei suf-
fren hem self to cleuen or ioynen hem to shrewes.
¶ And certys þe same þing may most digneliche Iugen

Have you not
read how Anax-
archus bit off his
tongue and spat
it in the face of
Niocreon?

What is it that
one man can do
to another that
does not admit of
retaliation?

Busiris used to
kill his guests,
but at last him-
self was killed
by Hercules, his
guest.

Regulus put his
Carthaginian
prisoners in
chains, but was
afterwards
obliged to submit
to the fetters of
his enemies.

Is he mighty that
dares not inflict
what he would
upon another for
fear of a requital?
If powers and
honours were
intrinsically good,
they would never
be attained by
the wicked.

An union of
things opposite
is repugnant to
nature.

But as wicked
men do obtain
the highest
honours, it is
clear that honours
are not in them-
selves good,
otherwise they
would not fall to
the share of the
unworthy.

1399 *whiche*—which
1401 *owen*—owne
1406 *receyue*—receyuen
1406 *oper*—oother
1406 *herd told*—MS. herde
tolde, C. herd told
1409 *ȝe*—hise
herburghden — herber-
weden

1410 *slayn*—sleyn
1411 *had[de]*—hadde
1413 *most[e]*—mooste
1414 *bounden*—bownde
cheynes—MS. þeues, C.
cheynes
had[de]—hadde
1415 *somtyme*—whylom
1416 *pat*—þing—that hath

no power to don a thinge
oper—oother
1417 *hym*—in hym
dob—MS. dope, C. doth
to oper—in oother
1421 *togidres*—to-gidres
1423 *certeyne*—certein
1424 *tymes*—tyme
1425 *owen*—owne

The worst of men have often the largest share of Fortune's gifts. We judge him to be valiant who has given evidence of his fortitude.

1432

So music maketh a musician, &c.

The nature of everything consists in doing what is peculiar to itself, and it repels what is contrary to it.

Riches cannot restrain avarice. Power cannot make a man master of himself if he is the slave of his lusts.

Dignities conferred upon base men do not make them worthy, but rather expose their want of merit.

Why is it so? 'Tis because you give false names to things. You dignify riches, power, and
[* fol. 14.]
honours, with names they have no title to.

1450

In fine, the same may be said of all the gifts of Fortune, in which nothing is desirable, nothing of natural good in them, since they are not always allotted to good men, nor make them good to whom they are attached.

1429 *whiche*—which
1430 *auȝt[e]*—owhte
1432 *Soþe*—soth
swyfte—swyft
1435 *is*—nis
1436 *effectis*—effect
1437 *oute*—owt

and seyen of alle þe ȝiftis of fortune þat most plenteuously comen to shrewes. ¶ Of þe whiche ȝiftys I trowe þat it auȝt[e] ben considered þat no man doutip þat he nis strong. in whom he seep strengþe. *and* in whom þat swiftnesse is ¶ Soþe it is þat he is swyfte.

Also musyk makeþ musiciens. *and* fysik makeþ phisiciens. *and* rethorik rethoriens. ¶ For whi þe nature of euery þing makip his propretee. ne it is nat entermedled wip þe effectis of contrarious þinges.

¶ And as of wil it chaseþ oute þinges þat to it ben contrarie ¶ But certys rycchesse may nat restreynen avarice vnstaunched ¶ Ne power [ne] makeþ nat a man myȝty ouer hym self. whiche þat vicious lustis holden destreined wip cheins þat ne mowen nat ben vnbounden. *and* dignitees þat ben ȝeuen to shrewed[e] folk nat oonly ne makip hem nat digne. but it shewep raper al openly þat þei ben vnworpi *and* vndigne.

¶ And whi is it þus. ¶ Certis for ȝe han ioye to clepen þinges wip fals[e] names. þat beren hem al in þe contrarie. þe whiche names ben ful ofte reproued by þe effect of þe same þinges. so þat *þise ilke rycchesse ne auȝten nat by ryȝt to ben cleped ryccheasa.

ne whiche power ne auȝt[e] not ben cleped power. ne whiche dignitee ne auȝt[e] nat ben cleped dignitee.

¶ And at þe laste I may conclude þe same þinge of al þe ȝiftes of fortune in whiche þer nis no þing to ben desired. ne þat haþ in hym self natural bounte.

¶ as it is ful wel sene. for neyþer þei ne ioygnen hem nat alwey to goode men. ne maken hem alwey goode to whom þei ben y-ioigned.

1441 *ben*—be
1442 *shrewed[e]*—shrewede
1446 *fals[e]*—false
al—alle
1447 *whiche*—which
1448 *auȝten*—owhten
rycchesse—rychesses

1450 *whiche*—swich
auȝt[e]—owhte
1451 *whiche*—swich
auȝt[e]—owht
1453 *al*—alle
1454 *haþ*—MS. haþe
1455 *sene*—1-sene

NOUIMUS QUANTOS DEDERAT.

WE han wel knowen how many greet[e] harmes *and*
destruccionis weren doñ by þe Emperoure Nero.

[The sixte Metur.]
We know what
ruin Nero did.
1459

¶ He letes brenne þe citee of Rome *and* made slen þe
senatours. and he cruel somtyme slouȝ hys broþer. *and*
he was makid moyst wip þe blood of hys modir. þat is
to seyn he let sleen *and* slitten þe body of his modir to
seen where he was conceined. *and* he loked[e] on euery
half vpon hir colde dede body. ne no tere ne wette
his face. but he was so hard herted þat he myȝt[e] ben
domesman or Iuge of hire dede beaute. ¶ And ȝitte

He burnt Rome,
he slew the con-
script fathers,
murdered his
brother, and
spilt his mother's
blood.

He looked un-
moved upon his
mother's corpse,
and passed judg-
ment upon her
beauty.

neuerþeles gouerned[e] þis Nero by Ceptre al þe peoples
þat phebus þe sonne may seen comyng from his outereſt
arysyng til he hidde his bemes vndir þe wawes. ¶ þat
is to seyne. he gouerned[e] alle þe peoples by Ceptre im-
perial þat þe sonne goȝ aboute from est to west ¶ And

Yet this parricide
ruled over all
lands, illumined
by the sun in his
diurnal course,
and controlled
the frozen regions
of the pole.

eke þis Nero goueyrende by Ceptre. alle þe peoples þat
ben vndir þe colde sterres þat hyȝten þe seuene triones.
þis is to seyn he gouerned[e] alle þe poeples þat ben vndir

1472

þe parties of þe norþe. ¶ And eke Nero gouerned[e]
alle þe poeples þat þe violent wynde Nothus scorchip
and bakip þe brennynges sandes by his drie hete. þat

He governed, too,
the people in the
torrid zone.

is to seyne. alle þe poeples in þe souþe. [but yit ne
myhte nat al his heye power torne the woodnesse of
this wykkyd nero / Allas it is greuous fortune it is]. as
ofte as wicked swerde is ioygned to cruel venym. þat is
to sein. venimous cruelte to lordshipe.

But yet Nero's
power could not
tame his ferocious
mind.

It is a grievous
thing when
power strength-
ens the arm of
him whose will
prompte him to
deeds of cruelty.

1458 greet[e]—greta
1460 letes—let
1461 somtyme slouȝ—whilom
slow
1463 let—lette
1464 where—wher
1465 half—halue
1466 myȝt[e]—myhte
1467 here—hyr
1468 neuerþeles—natheles
gouerned[e]—gouernede

1469 al—alle
1469 from—fram
outerest—owtereste
1470 hidde—hide
1471 seyne—seyn
1472 goȝ—MS. goþe, C. goth
1473 goueyrende—gouernyd
1474 triones—tyryones
1475 gouerned[e]—gouernede
1476 parties—party
norþe—north

1476 gouerned[e]—gouern-
ede
1477 wynde—wynd
scorchip—scorkilth
1478 seyne—seyn
souþe—sowth
1479-81 [but—it is]—MS.
has: but ne how greuous
fortune is
1482 swerde—swerd

TUM EGO SCIS INQUAM.

[The seunde
prose.]

B. Thou knowest
that I did not
covet mortal and
transitory things.

I only wished to
exercise my
virtue in public
concerns, lest it
should grow
feeble by in-
a tivity.

1490 Anne seide I þus. þou wost wel þiself þat þe
couctise of mortal þinges ne hadden neuer lord-
shipe of me. but I haue wel desired matere of þinges
to done. as who seip. I desired[e] to han matere of
gouernaunce ouer comunalites. ¶ For vertue stille ne
sholde not elden. þat is to seyn. þat list þat or he wex
1490 olde ¶ His uertue þat lay now ful stille. ne sholde
nat perisshe vnexcerised in gouernaunce of comune.
¶ For whiche men myzten speke or writen of his
goode gouernement. ¶ *Philosophie*. ¶ For soþe quod
she. and þat is a þing þat may drawen to gouernaunce
swiche hertes as ben worþi and noble of hir nature.
but napeles it may nat drawen or tollen swiche hertes as
ben y-brouzt to þe ful[le] perfeccioun of vertue. þat is
to seyn couetyse of glorie and renoun to han wel
administred þe comune þinges. or doon goode decertes

P. A love of
glory is one of
those things that
may captivate
minds naturally
great, but not
yet arrived at
the perfection of
virtue.

But consider how
small and void of
weight is that
glory.

1500 to profit of þe comune. for se now and considere how
litel and how voide of al prise is pilke glorie. ¶ Cer-
teine þing is as þou hast lerned by demonstracioun of
astronomye þat al þe envyrnyng of þe erþe aboute
ne halt but þe resoun of a prykke at regard of þe gret-
nesse of heuene. þat is to seye. þat yif þat þer were
maked comparisoun of þe erþe to þe gretnesse of

Astronomy
teaches us that
this globe of earth
is but a speck
compared with
the extent of the
heavens,
and is as nothing
if compared with
the magnitude
of the celestial
sphere.

1507 heuene. men wolde Iugen in alle þat erþe [ne] helde
no space ¶ Of þe whiche litel regioun of þis worlde
þe ferþe partie is enhabitid wip lyuyng beestes þat
we knowen. as þou hast þi self lerned by tholome þat
prouith it. ¶ yif þou haddest wip drawen and abated
in þi þouzte fro pilke ferþe partie as myche space as þe
see and [the] mareys contenen and ouergon and as
myche space as þe regioun of droughte ouerstrecþeþ.

Ptolemy shows
that only one-
fourth of this
earth is inhabited
by living crea-
tures.

Deduct from this
the space occupied
by seas, marshes,
lakes, and deserts,
and there remains
but a small pro-
portion left for the
abode of man.

1487 desired[e]—desyre

1489 wax olde—wax old

1492 whiche—which

speke—spekyn

1496 tollen—MS. tellen, C.
tollen

1487 ful[le]—fulle

1501 al prise—alle prys

1506 seye—seyn

1507 woldo—woldyn

alle—al
[ne]—from C.

1510 lorned—ylrned

1512 þouzte—thowht

myche—moche

1513 [the]—from C.

1514 myche space—moche
spaces

pat is to seye sandes *and* desertes wel vnneþ sholde 1515

*þer dwellen a ryzt streite place to þe habitacioun of [° fol. 14 b.]

men. *and* 3e þan þat ben environed *and* closed wip And do you, who are confined to the least point of this point, think of nothing but of blasing far and wide your name and reputation? What is there great in a glory so circumscribed? 1522

manifesten 3oure renoun *and* don 3oure name to ben born forþe. but 3oure glorie þat is so narwe *and* so streyt yprongen in to so litel boundes. how myche conteinþe it in largesse *and* in greet doynge. And also 1522

settle þis þer to þat many a nacioun dyuerse of tonge *and* of maneres. *and* eke of resoun of hir lyuyng ben enhabitid in þe cloos of þilke litel habitacle. ¶ To þe whiche naciouns what for difficulte of weyes. *and* what for diuersite of langages. *and* what for defaute of vnusage entercomunynge of marchaundise. nat only þe names of singler men ne may [nat] streccchen. but eke 1529

þe fame of Citees ne may nat streccchen. ¶ At þe last[e] Certis in þe tyme of Marcus tulyus as hym self writþ in his book þat þe renoun of þe comune of Rome ne hadde nat 3itte passed ne cloumben ouer þe mountaigne þat hyzt Caucasus. *and* 3itte was þilke tyme rome wel wexen *and* gretly redouted of þe parthes. 1535

and eke of oper folk enhabityng aboute. ¶ Sest þou nat þan how streit *and* how compressed is þilke glorie þat 3e trauailen aboute to shew *and* to multiplie. May þan þe glorie of a singlere Romeyne streccchen pider as þe fame of þe name of Rome may nat clymben ne passen. ¶ And eke sest þou nat þat þe maners of diuerse folk *and* eke hir lawes ben discordaunt amonge hem self. so þat þilke þing þat sommen iugen worpi of preysynge. oper folk iugen þat it is worpi of torment. ¶ *and* þer of comeþ þat þou3 a man delite hym in 1545

1515 *seye*—seyn
1516 *streite*—streyt
1517 *þan*—thanne
1518 *inne*—in
1519 *leest[e]*—leste
1520 *þilke*—thilke
1521 *þenke 3e*—thinken ye
1522 *born forþe*—M.S. borne,
C. born, forth

1520 *narwe*—narwh
1521 *streyt*—streite
1522 *myche*—moche
1523 *conteinþe*—coueyteth
1524 *habitacle*—M.S. habit-
ache, C. habytacule
1529 [nat]—from C.
1531 *last[e]*—laste
1532 *writþ*—writ

1533 *hadde*—hadden
1534 *3itte*—omitted
1534 *hyzt*—hyhte
1535 *þilke*—thilke
1536 *wexen*—waxen
1536 *Sest þou*—sestow
1538 *shew*—shewe
1539 *singlere*—singler
1545 *comeþ*—comth it

And do you, who are confined to the least point of this point, think of nothing but of blasing far and wide your name and reputation? What is there great in a glory so circumscribed?

Even in this contracted circle, there is a great variety of nations,

to whom not only the fame of particular men, but even of great cities, cannot extend.

In the time of Marcus Tullius the fame of Rome did not reach beyond Mount Caucasus.

How narrow, then, is that glory which you labour to propagate. Shall the glory of a Roman citizen reach those places where the name even of Rome was never heard?

Customs and institutions differ in different countries.

What is praise-worthy in one is blame-worthy in another.

It is not the interest of any man who desires renown to have his name spread through many countries. He ought, therefore, to be satisfied with the glory he has acquired at home. But of how many personages illustrious in their times, have the memorials been lost through the carelessness and neglect of writers. But writings do not preserve the names of men for ever.

1557

But perhaps you suppose that you shall secure immortality if your names are transmitted to future ages.

If you consider the infinite space of eternity you will have no reason to rejoice in this supposition.

If a moment be compared with 10,000 years, there is a proportion between them, though a very small one. But this number of years, multiplied by whatever sum you please, vanishes when compared with the infinite extent of eternity.

There may be comparison between finite things, but none between the infinite and finite. Hence it is, that Fame (however lasting), compared with eternity, will seem absolutely nothing.

preysyng of his renoun. he ne may nat in no wise bryngen furpe ne spreden his name to many manere peoples. ¶ And perfore euery maner man auzte to ben paid of hys glorie pat is puplissed among hys owen ney3bores. ¶ And pilke noble renoun shal be streyned wip-inne þe boundes of o maner folk but how many a man þat was ful noble in his tyme. hap þe nedý and wrecched forzetyng of writers put oute of mynde and don away. ¶ Al be it so þat certys pilke writynges profiten litel. þe whiche writynges longe and derke elde doþ awaye boþe hem and eke her autours. but

3e men semen to geten 3ow a perdurablete whan 3e penke þat in tyme comyng 3oure fame shal lasten. ¶ But napeles yif þou wilt maken comparisoun to þe endeles space of eternite what ping hast þou by whiche þou maist reioysen þe of long lastyng of þi name. ¶ For if þer were makéd comparysoun of þe abidyng of a moment to ten þousand wynter. for as myche as boþe þe spaces ben endid. ¶ For 3it hap þe moment some porcioun of hit al þouz it a litel be. ¶ But napeles pilke self noubre of 3eres. and eke as many 3eres as þer to may be multiplied. ne may nat certys be comparisound to þe perdurablete þat is een[de]les. ¶ For of pinges þat han ende may be mad comparisoun [but of thinges that ben with-owtyn ende to thinges þat han ende may be makéd no comparysoun]. ¶ And for þi is it al þouz renoun of as longe tyme as euer þe lyst to pinken were þouz by þe regard of eternite. þat is vnstauncheable and infinit. it ne sholde nat oonly semen litel. but pleinliche ry3t nou3t. ¶ But 3e men certys ne konne

1547 *furpe*—forth
manere—maner

1548 *perfore*—ther-for
auzte—owhte

1549 *paid*—payed

hys owen—hise owne

1550 *ney3bores*—ne3heboours
be—ben

1552 *hap*—MS. hape [put owt]

1553 *put* (MS. *putte*) oute—

1556 *derke*—derk

doþ awaye—MS. doþe, C.

doth a way

her autours—hir actorros

1557 *3e*—3ow

semen—semetn

1558 *comyng*—to comyngs

1559 *wilt*—wolt

1560 *whiche*—which

1563 *myche*—moche

1564 *þe*—the

hap—MS. hape

some—som

1566 *self*—selue

1567 *be* (2)—ben

1569 *een[de]les*—endeles

1569 *mad*—MS. made, C.

makéd

[but *comparysoun*]—

1573 *by*—to

[from C.]

don no þing aryȝt. but ȝif it be for þe audience of poeple. *and* for ydel rumours. *and* ȝe forsaken þe grete worp-
nesse of conscience *and* of vertue. *and* ȝe seken ȝoure
gerdouns of þe smale wordes of strange folke. ¶ Hauē
now here *and* vnderstonde in þe lyȝtnesse of whiche
pride *and* veyne glorie. how a man scorned[e] festiually
and myrily swiche vanite. somtyme þere was a man þat
had[de] assayed wiþ striuyng wordes an oþer man. ¶ þe
whiche nat for vsage of verrey vertue. but for proude
veyne glorie had[de] taken vpon hym falsly þe name
of a philosopher. ¶ þis raþer man þat I speke of
þouȝt[e] he wolde assay[e] where he þilke were a philo-
sopher or no. þat is to seyne yif he wolde han suffred
lytly in pacience þe wronges *þat weren don vnto
hym. ¶ þis feined[e] philosophre took pacience a
litel while. *and* whan he hadde receiued wordes of
outrage he as in struyunge aȝeine *and* reioysynge of
hym self seide at þe last[e] ryȝt þus. ¶ vnderstondest
þou nat þat I am a philosophre. þat oþer man an-
swered[e] aȝein ful bityngly *and* seide. ¶ I had[de]
wel vnderstonde[n] [yt]. yif þou haddest holden þi tonge
stille. ¶ But what is it to þise noble worpi men.
For certys of swyche folk speke .I. þat seken glorie wiþ
vertue. what is it *quod* she. what atteiniþ fame to
swiche folk whan þe body is resolued by þe deep. atte
þe last[e]. ¶ For yif so be þat men dien in al. þat is
to seyne body *and* soule. þe whiche þing oure resoun
defendiþ vs to byleuen þanne is þere no glorie in no
wyse. For what sholde þilke glorie ben. for he of
whom þis glorie is seid to be nis ryȝt nouȝt in no wise.
and ȝif þe soule whiche þat hap in it self science of

But yet you do
good from no
other view than
to have the empty
applause of the
people, foregoing
the pleasures of a
good conscience
in order to have
the insignificant
praises of other
people.

This silly vanity
was once thus
ingeniously and
pleasantly rallied.
A certain man,
who had assumed
the name of a
philosopher
through a love
of vain-glory,
was told by a
man of humour
that he could
prove he was a
philosopher by
bearing patiently
the injuries
offered him.

[* fol. 15.]

1590

After counterfeit-
ing patience for a
while, the sophist
said to the other,
'You must surely
confess that I am
a philosopher.'

'I might have
believed it,' said
the other, 'had
you held your
tongue.'
What advantage
is it to great and
worthy men to be
extolled after
death?

1600

If body and soul
die, then there
can be no glory;
nor can there be
when he (to
whom it is
ascribed) does
not exist.

1605

1605

1590 *whiche*—swych
1591 *scorned[e]*—scornede
1593 *swiche*—swych
somtyme—whilom
1593 *had[de]*—hadde
1594 *whiche*—which
proude—prowd
1596 *speke*—spak
1597 *þouȝt[e]*—thowhte

1587 *assay[e]*—assaye
1593 *seyne*—seyn
1597 *feined[e]*—feynede
1592 *aȝeine*—ayein
1593 *last[e]*—laste
vnderstondest þou—vn-
dyrstonadow
1594 *answered[e]*—answerde
1595 *had[de]*—hadde

1596 [*ȝe*]—from C.
1601 *last[e]*—laste
1602 *seyne*—seyn
1604 *for* (2)—whan
1605 *þis*—þilke
seid—MS. seide, C. seyð
nouȝt—nawht
1606 *hap*—MS. haþe

But if the soul
is immortal when
it leaves the body,
it takes no
thought of the
joys of this
world.

goode werkes vnbounden fro þe prisoun of þe erþe
wendep frely to þe heuene. dispiseþ it nouȝt þan alle
erþely occupaciouns. and beyng in heuene reioiseþ þat
it is exempt from alle erþely þinges [as wo seith /
1611 thanne rekketh the sowle of no glorie of renoun of this
world].

QUICUMQUE SOLAM MENTE.

[The 7th Metre.]

Let him who
seeks fame, think-
ing it to be the
sovereign good,
look upon the
broad universe
and this circum-
scribed earth;
and he will then
despise a glorious
name limited to
such a confined
space.

Who so þat wiþ ouerþrowyng pouȝt only sekeþ glorie
of fame. and wenip þat it be souereyne good
¶ Lete hym loke vpon þe brode shewyng contreys of
þe heuen. and vpon þe streite sete of þis erþe. and
he shal be ashamed of þe ences of his name. þat may
nat fulfille þe litel compas of þe erþe. ¶ O what
coueiten proude folke to liften vpon hire nekkes in

Will splendid
titles and renown
prolong a man's
life?

1619 ydel and dedely ȝok of þis worlde. ¶ For al pouȝ
[þat] renoune y-spradde passyng to ferne poeþles goþ
by dyuerse tonges. and al pouȝ grete houses and kyn-

In the grave
there is no dis-
tinction between
high and low.

Where is the good
Fabricius now?
Where the noble
Brutus, or stern
Cato?

1623 redes shyne wiþ clere titles of honours. ȝit napeles
deep dispiseþ al heye glorie of fame. and deep wrappeþ
to gidre þe heye heuedes and þe lowe and makeþ egal
and euene þe heyest[e] to þe lowest[e]. ¶ where
wonen now þe bones of trewe fabricius. what is
now brutus or stiern Caton þe þinne fame ȝit lastyng

Their empty
names still live,
but of their
persons we know
nothing.

1629 of hir ydel names is markid wiþ a fewe lettres. but
al pouȝ we han knowen þe faire wordes of þe fames of
hem. it is nat ȝeuen to knowe hem þat ben dede and
consumpt. Liggip þanne stille al vtterly vnknowable
ne fame ne makeþ ȝow nat knowe. and yif ȝe wene
to lyuen þe lenger for wynde of ȝoure mortal name.

Fame cannot
make you known.

1635 whan o cruel day shal raushe ȝow. þan is þe secunde
deep dwellyng in ȝow. *Glosa.* þe first deep he clepip

1608 nouȝt þan—nat thanne
1610 from—fro
1610—1613 [as — world] —
from C.
1615 Lete—Lak
loke—looken
1616 seke—Cȝte
1617 be—ben

1619 vpon—vp
1620 and dedely—in the dedly
1621 y-spradde—ysprad
[þat]—from C.
ferne—MS. serue, C. ferne
goþ—MS. goþe, C. goth
1622 and (2)—or
1623 shyne—shynen

1623 clere—cler
1624 al—alle
1626 heyest[e]—heyste
lowest[e]—loweste
1628 stiern—MS. sciern, C.
stierne
1632 consumpt—consumeþ
1634 lenger—longere

here þe departyng of þe body *and* þe soule. ¶ *And* þe secunde deþ he cleþeþ as here. þe styntyng of þe renoune of fame.*

It will be effaced by conquering Time, so that death will be doubly victorious.

* The next three chapters are from the Camb. MS.

[SET NE ME INEXORABILE CONTRA.

BVt for-as-mochel as thou shalt nat wenen *quod* she þat I bere vntretable batayle ayenis fortune // yit som-tyme it by-falleth þat she desseyuable desserueth to han ryht good thank of men // *And* þat is whan she hire self opneth / *and* whan she descouereth hir frownt / *and* sheweth hir maneres *par-auenture* yit vndirstondesthow nat þat .I. shal seye // it is a wondyr þat .I. desyre to telle / *and* forþi vnnethe may I. vnpleyten my sentence with wordes for I. deme þat contraryos fortune profiteth more to men than fortune debonayre // For al-vey whan fortune semeth debonayre than she lyeth falsly in by-hetyng the hope of welefulnesse // but forsothe *contraryos* fortune is alwey sothfast / whan she sheweth hir self vnstable thorw hyr chaungyng // the amyable fortune desseyueth folk / the contrarye fortune techeth // the amyable fortune byndeth with the beaute of false goodys the hertes of folk þat vsen hem / the contrarye fortune vnbyndeth hem by þ^e knowyng of frele welefulnesse // the amyable fortune maysthow sen alwey wyndyng *and* flowyng / *and* euere mysknowyng of hir self // the contrarye fortune is a-tempre *and* restreynynd *and* wys thorw excersyse of hir aduersyte // at the laste amyable fortune with hir flaterynges draweth mys wandryng men fro the souereyne good // the contraryos fortune ledith ofte folk ayein to sothfast goodes / *and* haleth hem ayein as with an hooke / weenesthow thanne þat thou owhtest to leten this a lytel thing / þat this aspre *and* horrible fortune hath discoueryd to the / the thowhtes of thy trewe frendes // For-why this ilke for-

[The vit] prose.]
'But do not believe,' said Philosophy, 'that I am an implacable enemy to Fortune. This inconstant dame sometimes deserves well of men, when she appears in her true colours. And what I say may perhaps appear paradoxical. That is, that adverse fortune is more beneficial than prosperous fortune.'

1650

The latter lies and deceives us, the former displays her natural inconstancy.

That deceives us, this instructs us; that, by a fallacious show of good, enslaves the mind; this, by the knowledge of her fickleness, frees and absolves it.

The one is wavering and incapable of reflection, the other is staid and wise through experience of adversity. Lastly, prosperous fortune leads men astray. Adversity teaches them wherein real happiness consists. It renders us no inconsiderable service in enabling us to recognize our true friends.

1668

- 1669 tune hath departyd *and* vncoueryd to the bothe the
certeyn vysages *and* ek the dowtos visages of thy
felawes // whan she departyd away fro the / she took
1672 away hyr frendes *and* lafte the thyne frendes // now
whan thou were ryche *and* weleful as the semede / *with*
how mochel woldesthow han bowht the fulle know-
yng of this // *pat* is to seyn the knowyng of thy
verray freendes // now pleyne the nat thanne of Rychesse
.I.lorn syn thou hast fowndyn the moste presyos kynde
of Rychesse *pat* is to seyn thy verray frendes.

At what price
would you not
have bought this
knowledge in
your prosperity?

Complain not,
then, of loss of
wealth, since
thou hast found
infinitely greater
riches in your
true friends.

QUOD MUNDUS STABILI FIDE.

[The viij Meter.]
This world, by
an invariable
order, suffers
change.
Elements, that by
nature disagree,
are restrained by
concord.

- THat þ^e world with stable feith / varieth acordable
chaungynges // *pat* the contraryos qualite of elementz
holden amonge hem self aliaunce perdurable / *pat* phebus
the sonne *with* his goldene chariet / bryngeth forth the
rosene day / *pat* the mone hath commaundement ouer the
1684 nyhtes // whiche nyhtes hesperus the euesterre hat browt //
pat þ^e se gredy to flowen constreyneth *with* a certeyn ende
hise floodes / so *pat* it is nat l[e]ueful to strechche hise
1687 brode termes or bowndes vp-on the erthes // *pat* is to seyn
to couere alle the erthe // Al this a-cordaunce of thinges
is bownden *with* looue / *pat* gouerneth erthe *and* see / *and*
hath also commaundementz to the heuenes / *and* yif
this looue slakede the brydelis / alle thinges *pat* now
louen hem to gederes / wolden maken a batayle contyn-
uely *and* stryuen to fordoon the fasoun of this worlde /
the which they now leden in acordable feith by fayre
moeuynges // this looue halt to gideres poeples loygned
with an hooly bond / *and* knytteth sacrement of mar-
yages of chaste looues // And loue enditeth lawes to
trewelawes // O weleful weere mankynde / yif thilke
loue *pat* gouerneth heuene gouerned[e] yowre corages /

The sea is thus
kept within its
proper bounds.

This concord is
produced by love,
which governeth
earth and sea,
and extends its
influence to the
heavens.

If this chain of
love were broken
all things would
be in perpetual
strife, and the
world would go
to ruin.
Love binds
nations together,
it ties the nuptial
knot, and dictates
binding laws to
friendship.

Men were truly
blest if governed
by this celestial
love!

EXPLICIT LIBER 2^{us}.1690 *hath*—H. he hath

INCIPIT LIBER 3^{us}

IAM CANTUM ILLA FINIERAT.

By this she hadde endid hire song / whan the swetnesse
 of hire ditee hadde thowr perced me þat was desirous
 of herkninge / and .I. astoned hadde yit streyhte myn
 Eres / þat is to seyn to herkne the bet / what she wolde
 seye // so þat a litel here after .I. seyde thus // O thow
 þat art souereyn comfort of Angwissos corages // So thow
 hast remounted and norysshed me with the weyhte of thy
 sentences and with delit of thy syngynge // so þat .I. trowe
 nat now þat .I. be vnpanygal to the strokes of fortune / as
 who seyth. I. dar wel now suffren al the assautes of for-
 tune and wel deffende me fro hyr // and tho remedies
 whyche þat thow seydest hire byforn weren ryht sharpe
 Nat only þat .I. am nat agrysen of hem now // but .I. de-
 siros of herynge axe gretely to heeren tho remedies //
 than seyde she thus // þat feelede .I. ful wel quod she //
 whan þat thow ententyf and styлле rauysshedest my
 wordes // and .I. abood til þat thow haddest swych habyte
 of thy thought as thow hast now // or elles tyl þat .I.
 my self had[de] makid to the the same habyt / which
 þat is a moore verray thinge // And certes the remenaunt
 of thinges þat ben yit to seye / ben swyche // þat fyrst
 whan men tasten hem they ben bytynge / but whan
 they ben resseyuyd with-inne a whyht than ben they
 swete // but for thow seyst þat thow art so desirous to
 herkne hem // wit[h] how gret brennyng woldesthow
 glowen / yif thow wystest whyder .I. wol leden the //
 whydre is þat quod .I. // to thilke verray welefulnesse
 quod she // of whyche thyng herte dremeth // but
 for as moche as thy syhte is occupied and distorbed / by
 Imagynasyon of herthely thynges / thow mayst nat yit
 sen thilke selue welefulnesse // do quod .I. and shewe

[The fyrste prose.]
 Philosophy now
 ended her song.
 I was so charmed
 that I kept a
 listening as if
 she were still
 speaking.

At last I said,
 O sovereign com-
 forter of dejected
 minds, how much
 hast thou re-
 freshed me with
 the energy of thy
 discourse,
 so that I now
 think myself
 almost an equal
 match for For-
 tune and able to
 resist her blows.
 I fear not, there-
 fore, thy reme-
 dies, but earnestly
 desire to hear
 what they are.

1713

P. When I per-
 ceived that, silent
 and attentive, you
 received my
 words, I expected
 to find such a
 state of mind in
 you, or rather, I
 created in you
 such an one.
 What remains to
 be said is of such
 a nature that
 when it is first
 tasted it is
 pungent and un-
 pleasant, but
 when once swal-
 lowed it turns
 sweet, and is
 grateful to the
 stomach.
 But because you
 say you would
 now gladly hear,
 with what desire
 would you burn
 if you could
 imagine whither
 I am going to
 lead you?
 B. Whither is
 that, I pray?
 P. To that true
 felicity, of which
 you seem to have
 but a faint fore-
 taste.

1702 *streyhte*—H. strengthened | 1718 *had[de]*—H. hade
 1712 *am nat*—H. nam nought |

But your sight is clouded with false forms, so that it cannot yet behold this same felicity.
B. Show me, I pray, that true happiness without delay.
P. I will gladly do so at your desire, but I will first describe that false cause (of happiness), so that you may be better able to comprehend the exact model.

* Here the Add. MS. begins again.
 [The fyrst metur.]
 He who would sow seed must first clear the ground of useless weeds, so that he may reap an abundant harvest. Honey tastes all the sweeter to a palate disgusted by offensive flavours. The stars shine all the clearer when the southern showery blasts cease to blow. When Lucifer has chased away the dark night, then Phœbus mounts his gay chariot. So you, beholding the false felicity, and withdrawing your neck from the yoke of earthly affections, will soon see the sovereign good.
 [The 2d prose.]
 Philosophy, with a serious air, and appearing to recollect herself, and to rouse up all her faculties, thus began.
 All the cares and desires of men seek one end—happiness.

[* fol. 15 b.]

me / what is thilke verray welefulnesse / .I. preye the with-howte tarynge // þat wole .I. gladly don *quod* she / for the cause of the // but .I. wol fyrst marken the by wordes / and I wol enforcen me to enformen the // thilke false cause of blysfulnesse þat thow more knowest / so þat whan thow hast fully by-holden thilke false goodes and torned thyne eyen to þat oother syde / thow mowe knowe the clernesse of verray blysfulnesse //

*QUI SERERE INGENIUM.

¶ Who so wil sowe a felde plentiuous. lat hym first delyuer it of þornes and kerue asondre wip his hooke þe bushes and þe ferne so þat þe corne may comen heuy of eres and of greina. hony is þe more swete yif mouþes han firste tastid sauoures þat ben wikke. ¶ þe sterres shynen more agreably whan þe wynde Nothus letiþ his ploungy blastes. and aftir þat lucifer þe day sterre hap chased away þe derke nyzt. þe day þe feirer lediþ þe rosene horse of þe sonne. ¶ Ryzt so þou byholdyng first þe fals[e] goodes. bygynne to wipdrawe þi nek[ke] fro þe ȝok of erþely affeccions. and afterwarde þe verrey goodes shollen entre in to þi corage. 1750

TUNO DEFIXO PAULULUM.

þ^o fastned[e] she a lytel þe syzt of hir eyen and wipdrow hir ryzt as it were in to þe streite sete of hir pouzt. and bygan to speke ryzt þus. Alle þe cures quod she of mortal folk whiche þat trauaylen hem in many manere studies gon certys by diuerse weies. ¶ But napeles þei enforced hem *to comen oonly to on

1734 wole—H. shalle
 1739 wil—wole
felde—feeld
 1740 delyuer—delyuere
of—fro
hookes—hook
 1741 bushes—bosses
ferne—ferri
corne—korni
 1743 Arto—fyrst

1743 wikke—wykyd
 1744 wynde—wynd
his—hise
 1745 hap—MS. hape
 1746 feirer—fayrere
 1747 horse—hors
Ryzt—And Ryht
 1748 fals[e]—false
bygynne—bygyn
wipdrawe—wilt drawn

1748 nek[ke]—nekke
 1749 afterwarde—afterward
 1750 entre—entren
 1751 fastned[e]—fastnede
wipdraw—MS. wipdrown, C. with drowh
 1753 sets—Cyte
 1756 enforced—enforwen

ende of blisfulnesse [And blysfulesse] is swiche a goode
 þat who so haþ gotten it he ne may ouer þat no þing more
 desiire. and þis þing for soþe is þe souereyne good þat con-
 teinip in hym self al manere goodes. to þe whiche goode
 yif þere failed[e] any þing. it myzt[e] nat ben souereyne
 goode. ¶ For þan were þere som goode out of þis ilke soue-
 reyne goode þat myzt[e] ben desired. Now is it clere *and*
 certeyne þan þat blisfulnesse is a perfit estat by þe con-
 gregacioun of alle goodes. ¶ þe whiche blisfulnesse as
 I haue seid alle mortal folke enforcen hem to gotten by
 dyuerse weyes. ¶ For-whi þe couetise of verray goode
 is naturely y-plaunted in þe hertys of men. ¶ But þe
 myswandryng *errour* mysledip hem in to fals[e] goodes.
 ¶ of þe whiche men some of hem wenen þat soue-
 reygne goode is to lyue wip outen nede of any þing.
and traueilen hem to ben habundaunt of rycchesse.
 and some oper men demen. þat souerein goode be forto
 be ryzt digne of reuerences. *and* enforcen hem to ben
 reuerenced among hir neyȝbours. by þe honours þat þei
 han ygeten ¶ *and* some folk þer ben þat halden þat
 ryzt heyȝe power to be souereyn goode. *and* enforcen
 hem forto regnen or ellys to ioignen hem to hem þat
 regnen. ¶ And it semep to some oper folk þat noblesse
 of renoun be þe souerein goode. *and* hasten hem to
 gotten glorious name by þe artes of werre or of pees.
 and many folke mesuren *and* gessen þat souerein goode
 be ioye *and* gladnesse *and* wenen þat it be ryzt blisful
 [thyng] to ploungen hem in uoluptuous delit. ¶ And
 þer ben folk þat enterchaungen þe causes *and* þe endes

True happinesse is
 that complete
 good which, once
 obtained, leaves
 nothing more to
 be desired.
 It is the sovereign
 good, and com-
 prehends all
 others. It lacks
 nothing, other-
 wise it could not
 be the supreme
 good. Happiness
 is, therefore, that
 perfect state, in
 which all other
 goods meet and
 centre. It is the
 object which all
 men strive after.
 A desire of the
 true good is a
 natural instinct,
 but error misleads
 them to pursue
 false joys.

1769

Some, imagining
 the supreme good
 to consist in lack-
 ing nothing, la-
 bour for an abund-
 ance of *riches* ;
 others, supposing
 that this good lies
 in the *reverence*
 and *esteem* of
 their fellow men,
 strive to acquire
 honourable
 positions.

There are some,
 again, who place
 it in supreme
 power, and seek
 to rule, or to be
 favoured by the
 ruling powers.
 There are those
 who fancy *fame*
 to be the height
 of happiness, and
 seek by the arts
 of war or peace to
 get renown.

Many there are
 who believe no-
 thing to be better
 than *joy* and
gladness, and
 think it delightful
 to plunge into
 luxury.

1757 [And blysfulesse] —
 goode—good [from C.]

1758 so—so þat

haþ—MS. haþe

1759 souereyne—souereyn

1760 al—alle

goode—good

1761 þere—ther

failed[e]—faylyde

myzt[e]—myhte

souereyne goode—souereyn

good

1762 þan—thanne

þere—ther

1763 goode—good

souereyne—souereyn

1763 goode—good

myzt[e]—myhte

1764 certeyne—certein

1765 seid — MS. seide, C.

folke—foolk [seyd]

1767 goode—good

1768 fals[e]—false

1770 souereyne goode is —

souereyn good be

1771 lyue wip outen—lyuen

wip owte

1772 rycchesse—Rycheesses

1773 some—som

goode be—good ben

1774 be—ben

1775 neyȝbours—neeshebers

1776 halden—holden

1777 heyȝe—heyh

to—omitted

goode—good

1780 goode—good

1781 or—and

1782 folke—folk

goode—good

1783 be—by

1784 [thyng]—from C.

Some there are who use these causes and ends interchangeably, as those who desire riches as a means of getting power; or who desire power in order to get money or renown. In all they do they have a particular end in view. Nobility and popular favour are sought after by some in order to become famous. By others, wives and children are only desired as sources of pleasure. Friendship must not be reckoned among the goods of fortune, but among those of virtue, for it is a very sacred thing. All else are desired either for the power or pleasure they afford.

1802

The goods of the body fall under the same predicament. Strength and a good stature seem to give power and worthiness. Beauty and swiftness give glory and fame; and health gives delight. In all these happiness alone is sought. What a man most wishes for, that he esteems the supreme good, which, as we have defined, is happiness. Thou hast now before thee a view of human felicity (falsely so called), that is, riches, honour, power, glory, and delight, which last Epicurus

of pise forseide goodes as þei þat desiren rycchesse to han power *and* delices. Or ellis þei desiren power forto han moneye or for cause of renoun. ¶ In pise pinges *and* in swyche oþer pinges is tourned al þe entencioun of desirynges *and* [of] werkes of men. ¶ As þus. ¶ Noblesse *and* fauour of poeple whiche þat ȝiueþ as it semeþ a manere clernessee of renoun. ¶ *and* wijf *and* children þat men desiren for cause of delit *and* mirinesse. ¶ But forsoþe frendes ne shollen nat ben rekened among þe goodes of fortune but of vertue. for it is a ful holy manere ping. alle pise oþer pinges forsoþe ben taken for cause of power. or ellis for cause of delit. ¶ Certis now am I redy to referen þe goodes of þe body to pise forseide pinges abouen. ¶ For it semeþ þat strengþe *and* gretnesse of body ȝeuen power *and* worpinesse. ¶ *and* þat beaute *and* swiftnesse ȝeuen noblesse *and* glorie of renoun. *and* hele of body semeþ ȝiuen delit. ¶ In alle pise pingus it semeþ oonly þat blisfulnesse is desired. ¶ For-whi pilke ping þat euery man desireþ moost ouer alle pinges. he demip þat be þe souereyne goode. ¶ But I. haue diffined þat blisfulnesse is þe souereyne goode. for whiche euery wyȝt demip þat pilke estat þat he desireþ ouer alle pinges þat it be þe blisfulnesse. ¶ Now hast þou þan byforne [thy eyen] almost al þe purposed forme of þe welfulnesse of mankynde. þat is to seyne rycchesse. honours. power. glorie. *and* delitz. þe whiche delit oonly considered Epicurus Iuged *and* establissed. þat delit is þe souereyne goode. for as myche as alle oþer pinges as hym þouȝt[e] by-refte away ioie *and* myrþe from þe herte. ¶ But I retourne aȝeyne to þe studies of meen.

1788 *rycchesse*—rycchesses
1787 *delices*—delytes
1789 *oþer*—oother
al—alle
1790 [of]—from C.
1794 *shollen*—sholden
1795 *þe*—tho
1796 *oþer*—oother
1801 *swiftnesse*—swettnesse
1803 *ȝiuen*—MS. ȝiueþ, C.

ȝeuen
1806, 1807 *souereyne goode*—
souereyn good
1807 *whiche*—whych
1809 *þe*—omitted [for
þan byforne—thane by-
1810 [thy eyen]—from C.;
MS. has ȝeuen aȝeyne
almost—almeſt
welfulnesse—welcfulnesse]

1811 *seyns rycchesse*—seyn
Rychesses
1814 *souereyne goode*—sou-
reyn good
myche—moche
oþer—oother
1815 *þouȝt[e]*—thowhte
from—fram
1816 *aȝeyne*—ayein

of whiche men þe corage alwey rehersiþ *and* seekeþ þe souereyne goode of alle be it so þat it be wip a derke memorie [but he not by whiche paath]. ¶ Ryzt as a dronke man not nat by whiche pape he may retourne home to hys house. ¶ Semeþ it panne þat folk folyen *and* erren þat enforcen hem to haue nede of no þing ¶ Certys þer nys non oþer þing þat may so weel perfourny blisfulnesse as an estat plenteuous *of alle goodes þat ne haþ nede of none oþer þing. but þat it is suffisant of hym self. vnto hym self. and foleyen swyche folk panne. þat wenen þat pilk þing þat is ryzt goode. þat it be eke ryzt worþi of honour *and* of reuerence. ¶ Certis nay. for þat þing nys neyþer foule ne worþi to ben dispised þat al þe entencioun of mortel folke trauaille forto geten it. ¶ And power auȝt[e] nat þat eke to be rekened amonges goodes what ellis. for it nys nat to wene þat pilke þing þat is most worþi of alle þinges be feble *and* wip out strengþe *and* clernesse of renoun auȝte þat to ben dispised. ¶ Certys þer may no man forsake þat al þing þat is ryzt excellent *and* noble. þat it ne semeþ to be ryzt clere *and* renowned. ¶ For certis it nedip nat to seie. þat blisfulnesse be anguissous ne dreri ne subgit to greuances ne to sorwes. syn þat in ryzt litel þingus folk seken to haue *and* to vsen þat may deliten hem. ¶ Certys pise ben þe þinges þat men wolen *and* desyren to geten. and for pis cause desiren þei rycches. dignites. regnes. glorie *and* delices ¶ For þerby wenen þei to han suffisaunce honour power. renoun *and* gladnesse. ¶ panne is it goode. þat men seken þus by so many dyuerse studies. In whiche desirj it may lyȝtly be shewed.

considered as the sovereign good. I now return to the inclinations and pursuits of mankind.

1820

Their minds are bent upon the chief good, and are ever seeking it with a darkened understanding, like a drunken man,

[* fol. 16.] who cannot find his way home. Do they go astray who strive to keep themselves from want?

Ry no means.

No state is happier than that in which a man is above want, and independent of others.

Are they guilty of folly that seek esteem and reverence?

No; for that is not contemptible for which all men strive.

Is not power to be reckoned amongst desirable goods?

Why not? For that is not an insignificant good which invests a man with authority and command. Fame also is to be regarded, for everything excellent is also shining and renowned.

We hardly need say that happiness is not an unjoyous and melancholy state, for in the pursuit of the smallest matters men seek only pleasure. Hence it is that mankind seek riches, &c., because by them they hope to get independence, honour, &c. However varied

1818 *souereyne goode*—*souereyn* good
of—omitted
alle—al
derke—dirkyd
1819 (*but*—*paath*)—from C.
1820 *dronke*—dronken
pape—paath
1821 *home*—hym

1823 *perfourny*—*performe*
1826 *hap*—MS. *habe*
none—non
1827 *pilk*—*thilke*
1828 *goode*—good
1829 *foule*—fowl
1830 *al*—*weineyh* alle
1831 *trauaille*—*trauaylen*
auȝt[e]—owhte

1832 *be*—ben
1834 *out*—owhte
1835 *auȝte*—owhte
1836 *al*—alle
1837 *be*—ben
clere—cleer
1843 *rycches*—*Rychesses*
1846 *goode*—good
1847 *be*—ben

their desires,
Happiness is their
sole pursuit.
However various
men's opinions
are respecting
happiness, all
agree in pursuing
it as the end of
their actions and
desires.

[The 2^d Metur.]
I will now sing
of Nature's laws,
by which the
universe is
governed.

how grete is þe strengþe of nature. ¶ For how so þat
men han dyuerse sentences *and* discordyng algates men
accordyn alle in lyuyng þe ende of goode. 1850

QUANTAS RERUM FLECTAT.

¶ I likeþ me to shew[e] by subtil songe wiþ slakke *and*
delitable soun of strenges how þat nature myzty en-
clineþ *and* flitteþ gouvernementz of þinges ¶ *and* by
whiche lawes she purueiable kepþ þe grete worlde. *and*

1855 how she bindyngge restreineþ alle þingus by a bonde þat

[J] The Punic lion
submits to man,
and dreads the
keeper's lash;

may nat be vnbounden. ¶ Al be it so þat þe lions of
þe contree of pene beren þe fair[e] cheines. *and* taken
metes of þe handes of folk þat zeuen it hem. *and*

1859 dreden her sturly maystres of whiche þei ben wont to

yet, if he once
taste blood,

suffren [betinges]. yif þat hir horrible mouþes ben bi-
bled. þat is to sein of bestes deuoured. ¶ Hir corage
of tyme passeþ þat haþ ben ydel *and* rested. repaireþ
aþein þat þei roren greuously. *and* remembreþ on hir

his savage in-
stincts revive,

1864 nature. *and* slaken hir nekkes from hir cheins vn-

and his keeper
falls a victim to
his fury.

bounden. *and* hir maistre first to-teren wiþ bloody toþe
assaieþ þe woode wrappes of hem. ¶ þis is to sein þei
freten hir maister. ¶ *And* þe Iangland brid þat syngþ

[U]
If the caged bird
though daintily
fed, gets a sight
of the pleasant
grove where she
was wont to sing,

on þe heye braunches. þis is to sein in þe wode *and*
after is inclosed in a streit cage. ¶ al þou3 [þat] þe

1870 pleiyng besines of men zeueþ hem honied[e] drinks

she will spurn
her food, and
pine for the
beloved wode.

and large metes. wiþ swete studie. ¶ zit napeles yif
pilke brid skippyngge oute of hir streite cage seep þe
agreable shadewes of þe wodes. she defouleþ wiþ hir
fete hir metes yshad *and* sekeþ mournyng onoly þe
wode *and* twitriþ desiryngge þe wode wiþ hir swete

[W]
The sapling, bent
down by a mighty

voys. ¶ þe zerde of a tree þat is haled adoun by myzty

1848 *grete*—gret
1849 *algates*—Allegates
1850 *goode*—good
1851 *shew[e]*—shewe
1854 *whiche*—MS. swiche, C.
whyche
1855 *worlde*—world
1856 *be*—ben
1864 *vnbounden*—vnboundne

1857 *fair[e]*—fayre
1860 [*betinges*]—from C.
1862 *passer*—passed
1864 *from*—fram
1865 *vnbounden*—vnboundne
1865 *to-teren*—to-torn
1866 *toþe*—toth
1867 *Iangland*—Iangelynge
1869 *stroit*—stryht

1870 *pleiyng*—MS. pleinyng,
C. pleyingge
besines—bysynesse
honied[e]—honyede
1872 *oute*—owt
1873 *agreable*—agreables
1874 *fete*—feet
1875 *twitriþ*—twiterith

strengþe bowiþ redely þe croppe adoun. but yif þat þe hande of hym þat it bente lat it gon azein. ¶ An oon þe crop lokeþ vp ryzt to heuene. ¶ þe sonne phebus þat failleþ at euene in þe westrene wawes retornip azein eftsones his cart by a priue pape þere as it is wont aryse. ¶ Alle þinges seken azein in to hir propre cours. and alle þinges reioisen hem of hir retournynge azein to hir nature ne noon ordinaunce nis bytaken to þinges but þat. þat haþ ioignyng þe endynge to þe bygynnyng. and haþ makid þe cours of it self stable þat it chaungeþ nat from hys propre kynde. 1887

VOSQUE TERRENA ANIMALIA.

* (Certis also 3e men þat ben erpeliche bestes dremen alwey [yowre bygynnyng] al þouȝ it be wiþ a pinne ymaginacioun. and by a maner þouȝt al be it nat clerly ne perfily 3e looken from a fer til pilk verray fyn of blisfulnesse. and þefore þe naturel entencioun ledeþ 3ow to pilk verray good ¶ But many manere errors mistournip 3ow þer fro. ¶ Considere now yif þat be pilke þinges by whiche a man wenip to gete hym blysfulnesse. yif þat he may comen to pilke ende þat he wenep to come by nature ¶ For yif þat moneye or honours or pise oþer forseide þinges bryngen to men swiche a þing þat no goode ne faille hem. ne semeþ faille. ¶ Certys þan wil I graunt[e] þat þei ben maked blisful. by pilke þinges þat þei han geten. ¶ but yif so be þat pilke þinges ne mowe nat perfourmen þat þei by-heten and þat þer be defaute of many goodes. ¶ Shewep it nat þan clerely þat fals beaute of blisfulnesse is knowe and a-teint in pilke þinges. ¶ First and forward þou þi self þat haddest

hand, will resume its natural position as soon as the restraining force is removed.

(iii) Though the sun sets in the western main at eve, yet by a secret path he takes his wonted journey toward the east. All things pursue their proper course, obedient to the source of order.

Hence, throughout the world entire stability is found, for all things, having fulfilled their appointed course, return from whence they came.

[The 3^d prose.]

[* fol. 16 b.]

O earthly animals, you have an indistinct perception of your beginning, and you have ever the true end of felicity in view, but your natural instincts are perverted by many errors.

1893

Can men obtain the end they have in view by the means they usually employ in the pursuit of happiness? If riches and honours and the like make men happy, so that they shall want for nothing, then happiness may be procured by these acquisitions.

1901

But if these things cannot make good what they promise, if there still be something to be desired, then they are delusions, and the felicity after all is a counterfeit.

1877 *cropp*—crop
1879 *hande*—hand
1880 *bente*—bent
1890 *faill*—falleth
1891 *cart*—carte
1891 *a*—omitted
1892 *pape*—path
1893 *of*—MS. of of
1896 *hap*—MS. hape

1896 *ioignyng*—Ioyned
1896 *hap*—MS. hape [from C.
1896 *yowre bygynnyng*—
al—MS. as, C. Al
1891 *from*—fram
1891 *til*—to thylke
1892 *be*—omitted
1893 *pilk*—thylke
1896 *be*—by

1896 *gete*—goten
1899 *swiche*—swych
1899 *goode*—good
1900 *wil*—wole
1904 *graunt[e]*—graunte
1904 *many*—manye
1904 *clerly*—clerly
1905 *fals*—false
1905 *knowe*—known

In your prosperity were you never annoyed by some wrong or grievance?

haboundaunces of ryccchesses nat long agon. ¶ I axe
3if pat in þe haboundaunce of alle pilk[e] ryccchesses
þou were neuer anguissous or sory in þi corage of any
1910 wrong or greuauunce þat by-tidde þe on any syde.

B. I must confess that I cannot remember ever being wholly free from some trouble or other.

P. That was because something was absent which you did desire, or something present which you would fain be quit of.

B. That's quite true.

P. Then you did desire the presence of the one and the absence of the other?

B. I confess I did.

P. Every man is in need of what he desires.

B. Certainly he is.

P. If a man lack anything can he be supremely happy?

B. No.

P. Did you not in your abundance want for somewhat?

B. What then if I did?

P. It follows that riches cannot put a man beyond all want, although this was what they seemed to promise.

Money may part company with its owner, however unwilling he may be to lose it.

B. I confess that's true.

P. It ought to be confessed when every day we see might prevailing over right.

From whence springs so much litigation, but from this, that men seek to re-

¶ Certys quod I it remembreþ me nat þat euere I was so free of my þouzt. þat I ne was al-wey in anguyshe of somewhat. þat was þat þou lakkedest þat þou noldest han lakked. or ellys þou haddeþ þat þou noldest han had. ryzt so is it quod I þan. desiredest þou þe presence of þat oon and þe absence of þat oþer. I graunt[e] wel quod .I. for soþe quod she þan nedip þer somewhat þat euery man desireþ. 3e þer nedip quod I.

¶ Certis quod she and he þat hap lakke or nede of a wyzt nis nat in euery way suffisaunt to hym self. no quod .I. and þou quod she in alle þe plente of pi ryccchesse haddeþ pilke lak of suffisaunce. ¶ what ellis quod .I. ¶ þanne may nat ryccchesse maken þat a man nis nedy. ne þat he be suffisaunt to hym self. and þat was it þat þei byhyzten as it semep. ¶ and eke certys I trowe þat þis be gretly to consydere þat moneye ne hap nat in hys owen kynde þat it ne may ben by-nomen of hem þat han it maugre hem. ¶ I by-knowe it wel quod I ¶ whi sholdest þou nat by-knowen it quod she. whan euery day þe strengere folke by-nymen it fram þe febler maugre hem. ¶ Fro whennes comen ellys alle þise foreine compleintes or quereles of pletyngus. ¶ But for þat men axen azeine her moneye þat hap be by-nomen hem by force or by gyle. and alwey maugre hem. ¶ Ryzt so it is quod I. þan quod she hap a man nede to seken hym foreyne helpe by whiche he may defende hys moneye. who may say nay

1908 pilk[e]—thylike
1913 þat—lakkedest—And
was nat þat quod she for
þat the lakked som-what
1915 had—MS. hadde, C. had
1917 graunt[e]—grante
1919 hap—MS. hape
a wyzt—awht
1921 alle—al

1923 ryccchesse—Ryccchesses
lak—lakke
1925 ryccchesse—Ryccchesses
1927 hap—MS. hape
owen—owne
1930 strengere folke by-nymen
—strengere folk by-ne-
myn
1931 fram—fro

1931 febler—febelere
Pro—For
1933 azeine—ayeyn
1934 hap—MS. hape
be—ben
1936 hap—MS. hape
helpe—help
1937 say—sey

quod .I. ¶ Certis *quod* she *and* hym nedip no helpe
yif he ne hadde no moneye þat he myzt[e] leese. ¶ þat
is doutles *quod* .I. þanne is þis ping turned in to þe con-
trarie *quod* she ¶ For rycchesse þat men wenen sholde
make suffisaunce. þei maken a man raper han nede of
foreine helpe. ¶ whiche is þe manere or þe gise *quod*
she þat rycches may dryuen away nede. ¶ Riche folk
may þei neiþer han hungre ne þrest. þise ryche men
may þei feele no colde on hir lymes in wynter. ¶ But
þou wilt answere þat ryche men han y-nouȝ wher wip
þei may staunchen her hunger. *and* slaken her þrest
and don away colde. ¶ In þis wise may nede be con-
forted by rycchesses. but certys nede ne may nat al
outerly be don away. for þouȝ þis nede þat is alwey
gapyng *and* gredy be fulfilled wip rycchesses. *and* axe
any ping ȝit dwelleþ þanne a nede þat myzt[e] ben ful-
filled. ¶ I holde me stille *and* telle nat how þat litel
ping suffiseþ to nature. but certys to auarice ynouȝ ne
suffiseþ no ping. *¶ For syn þat rychesse ne may nat
al don away nede. but rychesse maken nede. what may
it þanne be þat ȝe wenen þat rycchesses mowen ȝeuen
ȝow suffisaunce.

cover their own
of which they
have been un-
justly deprived ?
1940

B. Nothing is
more true.

P. Then a man
needs the assist-
ance of others in
order to keep his
riches. If he had
no money to lose
he would not
stand in need of
this help ?

B. That is beyond
all doubt.

P. Then the very
reverse of what
was expected
(from riches)
takes place ? For
riches add to a
man's necessities.

Tell me how do
riches drive away
necessity ? Are
not rich men liable
to hunger, thirst,
and cold ? You
will say that
the rich have
wherewithal to
satisfy these
wants. By riches
indigence may be
alleviated, but
they cannot sat-
isfy every want.

[* fol. 17.]

Even if gaping
and greedy neces-
sity be filled with
riches, yet some
cravings will re-
main. A little
suffices for nature,
but avarice never
has enough.

If riches, then,
add to our wants,
why should you
think that they
can supply all
your necessities ?
[The 3rd Metur.]
The rich man,
had he a river of
gold, would never
rest content.
Though his neck
be loaded with
precious pearls,
and his fields be
covered with in-

1959

QUAMUIS FLUENTER DIUES.

A^l were it so þat a ryche couetous man hadde ruer
fletyng alle of golde ȝitte sholde it neuer staunche
hys couetise. ¶ And þouȝ he hadde his nekke l-charged
wip preciouise stones of þe rede see. *and* þouȝ he do
erye his feldes plentiuous wip an hundreþ oxen neuere
ne shal his bytyng bysynesse forleten hym while he

1938 *nedip*—no helpe—nodede
non help
1939 *myzt[e]*—myhte
1940 *doutles*—dowteles
1941 *rycchesse*—Rychesses
1943 *helpe*—help
1943 *whiche*—whyh
1944 *ryches*—Rychesse
1944 *dryuen*—dryue
1945 *hungre*—hungyr
1945 *þrest*—thurst

1946 *þei*—the
1946 *colds*—coold
1946 *in*—on
1947 *wilt answers*—wolt
Answersen
1947 *y-nouȝ*—y-now
1948 *þrest*—thurst
1949 *colds*—coold
1950 *nat*—omitted
1951 *outerly*—virely
1953 *myzt[e]* *ben*—myhte be

1957 *rychesso*—Rychesses
1960 *riuer*—a Ryuer
1961 *alle*—al
1961 *golde*—gold
1961 *ȝitte*—ȝit
1961 *staunche*—staunschyn
1963, 1963 *þouȝ*—thow
1964 *erye*—Ere
1964 *hundreþ*—hundred
1965 *whille*—whyly

numerable herds,
yet shall unquiet
care never forsake
him; and at his
death his riches
shall not bear
him company.

¹ Read *dignitates*.

[The 4th prose.]
It may be said
that *dignities*
confer honour on
their possessors.
But have they
power to destroy
vice or implant
virtue in the
heart?

So far from ex-
pelling vicious
habits, they only
render them more
conspicuous.

Hence arises the
indignation when
we see dignities
given to wicked
men.

Hence Catullus'
resentment
against Nonius,
whom he calls
the botch, or im-
postume of the
State.

lyueþ. ne þe lyzt[e] rychesses ne shal nat beren hym
compaignie whanne he is dede. 1967

SET DIGNITATIBUS.¹

Bvt dignitees to whom þei ben comen make þei hym
honorable *and* reuerent. han þei nat so grete strengþe
þat þei may putte vertues in þe hertis of folk. þat vsen
þe lordshipes of hem. or ellys may þei don away þe
vices. Certys þei [ne] ben nat wont to don away wik-
kednesses. but þei ben wont rapier to shew[en] wikked-
nesses. *and* þer of comeþ it þat I haue ryzt grete des-
deyne. þat dignites ben zeuen ofte to wicked men.

¶ For whiche þing catullus clepid a consul of Rome þat
hyt nonius postum. or boch. as who seiþ he clepiþ
hym a congregacioun of uices in his brest as a postum
is ful of corrupcioun. al were þis nonius set in a

1980 chayere of dignitee. Sest þou nat þan how gret vylenye
dignitees don to wikked men. ¶ Certys vnworþines of

The deformities
of wicked men
would be less
apparent if they
were in more ob-
scure situations.
Would you free
yourself from
peril by accepting
a magistracy
along with De-
coratus a buffoon
and informer?

wikked men sholde ben þe lasse ysen yif þei nere re-
nomed of none honours. ¶ Certys þou pi self ne
myztest nat ben brouzt wiþ as many perils as þou
myztest suffren þat þou woldest bere pi magistrat wiþ
decorat. þat is to seyn. þat for no peril þat myzt[e] bi-

1987 fallen þe by þe offence of þe kyng theodorik þou noldest
nat ben felawe in gouernaunce with decorat. whanne
þou say[e] þat he had[de] wikkid corage of a likerous
shrewe *and* of an acusor. ¶ Ne I ne may nat for swiche
honours Iugen hem worþi of reuerence þat I deme *and*
holde vnworþi to han þilke same honours. ¶ Now yif
þou saie a man þat were fulfilled of wisdom. certys þou

Honours do not
render undeserv-
ing persons
worthy of esteem.
If you find a man
endowed with
wisdom you

1966 lyzt[e]—lyhte
shal—shol
1967 dede—ded
1968 make—maken
1969 grete—gret
1972 [ne]—from C.
den—be
1973, 1973 wikkednesses —
wykkydnesse
1973 to—omitted
shewen—shewen
1974 comeþ—comth

1974 grete desdayne—gret
desdaign
1976 whiche—which
1977 lyzt—lyhte
nonius—MS. vonnus, C.
nomyus
boch—MS. boþe, C. boch
clepiþ—clepyd
1979 nonius—MS uonnus, C.
nomyus
set—MS. sette, C. set
1980 Sest þou—Sesthow

1980 þan—thanne
vylenye—fylonye [ynesse
1981 vnworþines—vnworþ-
1982 den—be
ysen—MS. ysene, C. I-sene
1984 many—many
1985 bere—beren
1986 myzt[e]—myhte
1987 þe (3)—omitted
1988 whanne—whan
1989 say[e]—saye
had[de]—hadde

ne myztest nat demen þat he were vnworpi to þe honour. or ellys to þe wisdom of whiche he is fulfilled. No *quod* .I. ¶ Certys dignitees *quod* she appertienen properly to vertue. and uertue transporteþ dignite anon to pilke man to whiche she hir self is conioigned. ¶ And for as moche as honours of poeple ne may nat maken folk digne of honour. it is wel seyn clerly þat þei ne han no propre beaute of dignite. ¶ And zit men auzten take more hede in þis. ¶ For if it so be þat he is most out cast þat most folk dispisen. or as dignite ne may nat maken shrewes worpi of no reuerences. þan makeþ dignites shrewes more dispised þan preised. þe whiche shrewes dignit[e] scheweþ to moche folk ¶ and for soþe nat vnpuissid. þat is forto sein. þat shrewes reuengen hem azeinward vpon dignites. for þei zellden azein to dignites as gret gerdoun whan þei byspotten and defoulen dignites wiþ hire vylenie. ¶ And for as moche as þou mow[e] knowe þat pilke verray reuerence ne may nat comen by þe shadewy transitorie dignitees. vndirstonde now þis. yif þat a man hadde vsed and hadde many manere dignites of consules and were comen perauenture amonges straunge naciouns. sholde pilke honour maken hym worshipful and redouted of straunge folk ¶ Certys yif þat honour of poeple were a naturel zifte to dignites. it ne myzte neuer cesen nowher amonges no maner folke to done hys office. ¶ Ryzt as fire in euery contre ne stinteþ nat to enchaufen and *to ben hote. but for as myche as forto be holden honorable or reuerent ne comeþ nat to folk of

deem him worthy of respect and of the wisdom which he professes.

B. I could not do otherwise.

P. Virtue has her proper worth, which she ever transfers to her votaries.

Honours conferred by the populace do not make men worthy of them, for they have no intrinsic merit to bestow. Dignities conferred upon shrews only make their vices the more conspicuous. Nor do dignities themselves escape without injury; for worthless men take their revenge upon them, and defile them by their contagious villainies.

2009

These shadowy honours have nothing in their nature to procure respect; for if a man, having borne the honours of the consulate, should go among barbarians would this honour gain him their respect?

2016

If respect were an attribute of honour it would infallibly bring esteem everywhere, just as heat is ever an attribute of fire.

[* fol. 17 b.]

Honours arise from the false

1994 *demen*—deme
1995 *whiche*—which
1998 *quod she*—omitted
1997 *vertue*—vertu
 uertue—vertu
1999 *whiche*—whyeh
2000 *clerly*—MS. clerly, C. clerly
2002 *awten* — *hede* —
 owhen taken mor heed
2002-3 *For*—*dignite*—For
 yif so be þat a wykkyd
 whyght be so mochel the
 fowlere and the moore

owt cast þat he is despised of most folk so as dignite
2004-2007 *maken* — *soþe*—
 maken shrewes digne of
 Reuerence the whych
 shrewes dignite sheweth
 to moche folk thanne
 makith dignite shrewes
 rather so moche more
 despised than preysed
 and formothe
2008 *zelden*—yilden
2000 *byspotten*—by-spetteu

2010 *hirs*—hyr
2011 *moche*—mochel
 mow[e]—mowe
2012 *þe shadewy* — thyse
 shadewe
2013 *vndirstonde* — vndyr-
 bis—thus [stand
2014 *hadde*—had
2018 *zifte*—yift
2019 *folke*—foolk
 done—don
2021 *enchaufen* — eschaufen
2021 *myche*—mochel
2022 *be*—ben

opinions of men,
and vanish when
they come among
those who do not
esteem them, that
is, among foreign
nations.

hir propre strengþe of nature. but only of þe fals[e]
opinioun of folk. þat is to sein. þat wenen þat dignites
maken folk digne of honour. An on þerfore whan þat
þei comen þer as folk ne knowen nat pilke dignites.

2027 her honours vanissen away and þat on oon. but þat is
a-mong straung folk. maist þou sein. but amongus
hem þat þei weren born duren pilk[e] dignites alwey.

Do they always
endure in those
places that gave
birth to them?

The Prætorate
was once a great
honour, but now
it is only an
empty name and
a heavy expense.

What is more
vile than the
office of the
superintendency
of provisions?

That which hath
no innate beauty
must lose its
splendour or
value according
as popular
opinion varies
concerning it.

If dignities can-
not confer esteem,
if they become
vile through
filthy shrews, if
they lose their
lustre by the
change of times,
if they become
worthless by the
change of popular
opinion, what
beauty do they
possess which
should make
them desirable,
or what dignity
can they confer
on others?

¶ Certys þe dignite of þe prouostrie of Rome was som-
tyme a grete power. now is it no þing but an ydel
name. and þe rente of þe senatorie a gret charge. and
yif a whizt somtyme hadde þe office to taken he[de] to
þe vitailles of þe poeple as of corne and what oþer þinges
he was holden amonges grete. but what þing is more
nowe out cast þanne pilke prouostrie ¶ And as I haue
seid a litel here byforne. þat pilke þing þat haþ no
propre beaute of hym self resceyueþ somtyme pris and
shinyng and somtyme lesiþ it by þe opinioun of
vsaunces. ¶ Now yif þat dignites þanne ne mowen
nat maken folk digne of reuerence. and yif þat dignites
wexen foule of hir wille by þe filþe of shrewes. ¶ and
yif þat dignites lesen hir shynynge by chaungyng of
tymes. and yif þei wexen foule by estimacioun of
poeple. what is it þat þei han in hem self of beaute
þat auzte hen desired. as who seiþ none. þanne ne
mowen þei ziuen no beaute of dignite to none oþer. 2047

QUAMUIS SE TIRIO.

[The 4th Meter.]
Nero, though in-
vested with the
purple and
adorned with
pearls, was hated
by all men.

Al be it so þat þe proude nero wiþ al his woode luxurie
kembed hym and apparaild hym wiþ faire purpers
of Tirie and wiþ white perles. Algates zitte throf he

2023 fals[e]—false
2024 þat (2)—omitted
2027 her—hyr
vanissen—vanessen
2028 a-mong—amonges
straung—straunge
but—ne
2029 þat—ther
duren pilk[e]—ne duren
nat thylke
2030 somtyme—whylom

2031 grete—gret
2032 þe (2)—omitted
2033 somtyme—whylom
þe—MS. þe þe
2034 corne—corn
what—omitted
2035 more nowe—now more
2036 cast—MS. caste, C. cast
2037 seid—MS. seide, C. seyð
here byforne—her by-for
hap—MS. hape

2042 filþe—felthe
2043 þat—omitted
2046 auzte—owhte
none—non
2047 þei—MS. 3e, C. they
none—non
2048 al (2)—alle
2049 kembed—kembde
apparaild—MS. apparail
en, C. a-paraylede
2050 zitte—yit

hateful to alle folk ¶ þis is to seyn þat al was he by- 2051
 hated of alle folk. ¶ 3itte þis wicked Nero hadde gret
 lordship *and* 3af somtyme to þe dredeful senatours þe
 vnworshipful setes of dignites. ¶ vnworshipful setes
 he clepiþ here fore þat Nero þat was so wikked 3af þo
 dignites. who wolde þanne resonably wenen þat blysful-
 nesse were in swiche honours as ben 3euen by vicious 2057
 shrewes.

Yet he had lord-
 ship, and gave to
 the senators the
 dishonoured seats
 of dignity.
 Who then can
 think that felicity
 resides in honours
 given by vicious
 shrews?

AN UERO REGNA.

[The 5th prose.]

Bvt regnes *and* familiarites of kynges may þei maken a
 man to ben my3ty. how ellys. ¶ whanne hir
 blysfulnesse dureþ perpetuely but certys þe olde age of
 tyme passeþ. *and* eke of present tyme now is ful of en-
 saamples how þat kynges þat han chaunged in to
 wrechednesse out of hir welefulnesse. ¶ O a noble þing
and a cler þing is power þat is nat founden my3ty to
 kepe it self. ¶ And yif þat power of realmes be auctour
and maker of blisfulnesse. yif þilke power lakkeþ on
 any side. amenusip it nat þilke blisfulnesse *and* bryngeþ
 in wrechednesse. but yif al be it so þat realmes of man-
 kynde stretchen broode. 3it mot þer nede ben myche
 folk ouer whiche þat euery kyng ne haþ no lordshipe
 ne comaundement ¶ *and* certys vpon þilke syde þat
 power failleþ whiche þat makip folk blisful. ry3t on þat
 same side nounpower entriþ vndirneþ þat makeþ hem
 wreches. ¶ In þis manere þanne moten kynges han
 more porcioun of wrechednesse þan of welefulnesse.
 ¶ A tyraunt þat was kyng of sisile þat had[de] assaied
 þe peril of his estat shewid[e] by similitude þe dredes
 of realmes by gastnesse of a swerde þat heng ouer þe
 heued of his familier. what þing is þan þis power þat

P. Do kingdoms
 and a familiarity
 with princes
 make a man
 mighty?
 B. Why should
 they not if they
 are durable?
 P. Past ages, as
 well as the pre-
 sent, furnish us
 with many ex-
 amples of princes
 who have met
 with dismal re-
 verses of fortune.
 O then how noble
 and glorious a
 thing is power
 that is too weak
 to preserve itself!
 If dominion
 brings felicity,
 then misery will
 follow if it be de-
 fective.
 But human rule
 has its limits,
 therefore wher-
 ever power ceases
 there impotence
 enters, bringing
 misery along
 with it.

2074
 Kings, therefore,
 have a larger por-
 tion of misery
 than of felicity.

Dionysius of
 Sicily, conscious
 of this condition,
 exhibited the
 fears and cares of
 royalty by the
 terror of a naked
 sword hanging

2053 *lordship*—lorshippe
3af somtyme—yaf wylom
dredeful—reuerency
 2055 *fore*—for; *3af*—yaf
 2060 *my3ty*—MS. vnm3ty,
 C. myhty
 2062 *passed*—passed
 of (3)—omitted

2063 *kynges þat han* —
 kynges ben
 2066 *kepe*—kepen
 2067 *maker*—makers
 2069 *yif*—yit
 2070 *stretchen*—streichchen
myche—moche

2071 *hap*—MS. habe
 2073 *whiche*—whyeh
 2074 *vndirneþ*—vndyr-nethe
 2077 *had[de]*—hadde
 2078 *shewid[e]*—shewede
 2079 *realmes*—Reaumes
swerde—swerd
heng—MS. henge, C. heng

over the head of
his friend and
flatterer Damocles. What then
is this thing called

[* fol. 18.]

Power, which
cannot do away
with care or fear?
Men would live in
security but can-
not, and yet they
glory in their
power. Is he
powerful who can-
not do what he
wishes? Is he a
mighty man who
goes surrounded
with an armed
guard, to terrify
those whom he
himself fears, and
whose power de-
pends solely upon
his numerous
retinue? Why
need I enlarge
upon the favour-
ites of princes
having thus dis-
played the imbe-
cility of kings?
Their prosperity
is affected by the
caprices of their
fortunate masters
as well as by the
adversity to which

2098

they are incident.
Nero only allowed
his master Seneca
to choose the man-
ner of his death.
Antonius (Caracalla)
commanded
Papinian to be
slain by the swords
of his soldiers. Yet
both would have
given up all they
possessed. Seneca
begged for poverty
and exile. But re-
lentless fortune
precipitated them
to destruction,
and did not permit
them to choose
their fate. What
then is Power,
which terrifies its
possessors, and
which cannot be
got rid of at
pleasure? No ad-
vantage is to be
gained by friend-

may nat don away þe bytynges of besines ne eschewe
þe prikkes of drede. and certys zit wolden þei lyuen
*in sykernesse. but þei may nat. and zit þei glorifien
hem in her power ¶ Holdest þou þan þat pilk[e] man
be myzty þat þou seest þat he wolde don þat he may
nat don. ¶ And holdest þou þan hym a myzty man
þat haþ enviredn hise sydes wiþ men of armes or
seruauntes and dredeþ more [hem] þat he makeþ agast.
þen þei dreden hym. and þat is put in þe handes of hise
seruauntz. for he sholde seme myzty but of familiers
[or] seruauntz of kynges. ¶ what sholde I telle þe
any þing. syn þat I my self haue shewed þe þat realmes
hem self ben ful of gret feblenesse. þe whiche familiers
certis þe real power of kynges in hool estat and in estat
abated ful [ofte] þroweþ adoun. ¶ Nero constreined[e]
his familier and his maistre seneca to chesen on what
deeþ he wolde deien. ¶ Antonius comaundid[e] þat
knyztis slown wiþ her swerdis Papinian his familier
whiche Papinian had[de] ben long tyme ful myzty
a-monges hem of þe courte. and zit certis þei wolde boþe
han renounced her power. of whiche [two] senek en-
forced[e] hym to ziuen to Nero his rychesses. and also
to han gon in to solitarie exil. ¶ But whan þe grete
weyzt. þat is to sein of lordes power or of fortune
draweþ hem þat sholden falle. neyþer of hem ne
myzt[e] do þat he wolde. what þing is þanne pilke
power þat þou; men han it þat þei ben agast. ¶ and
whan þou woldest han it þou nart nat siker. ¶ And
yif þou woldest forleten it þou mayst nat eschewen it.
¶ But wheþir swiche men ben frendes at nede as þen
conseiled by fortune and nat by vertue. Certys swiche

2081 *besines*—bysynesse

2093 *zit*—yif

glorifien—gloryfye

2084 *pilk[e]*—thylke

2087 *hap*—MS. haþe

enviredn—enuyrowned

2088 *[hem]*—from C.

2089 *þen*—than

2091 *[or]*—from C

2092 *realmes*—Reames

2083 *feblenesse*—feblesse

2084 *real*—Ryal

2095 *[ofte]*—from C.

constreined[e] — con-

2096 *his* (1)—hyr [streynede]

seneca—Senek

2087 *comaundid[e]* — com-

2088 *her*—hyr [aundede]

2089 *whiche*—which

had[de] *ben long* — þat

hadde ben longe

2100 *courte*—court

woldo—wolden

2101 *[two]*—from C.

enforced[e]—enforcede

2102 *ziuen*—yeuen

his—hyse

2104 *weyzt*—weyhte

2105 *sholden*—sholen

2106 *myzt[e]*—myhte

folk as weleful fortune makeþ frendes. contrarious fortune makeþ hem enmyse. ¶ And what pestilence is more myȝty forto anoye a wiȝt þan a familier enemy.

QUI SE UALET¹ ESSE POTENTEM. [Read *uole*]

Who so wolde ben myȝty he mot daunten hys cruel corage. ne put[te] nat his nekke ouercomen vndir þe foule reines of lecherie. for al be it so þat þi lordship[e] strecche so fer þat þe contre Inde quakiþ at þi comaundement. or at þi lawes. and þat þe leest isle in þe see þat hyȝt tile be þral to þe ¶ ȝit yif þou mayst nat puten away þi foule derk[e] desijres and dryuen oute fro þe wreched compleyntes. Certis it nis no power þat þou hast. 2123

GLORIA UERO QUAM FALLAX.

Bvt glorie how deceivable and how foule is it ofte. for whiche þing nat vnskilfully a tregedien þat is to sein a maker of dites þat hyȝten tregedies cried[e] and seide. ¶ O glorie glorie *quod* he. þou nart no þing ellys to þousandes of folkes. but a gret sweller of eres. for many[e] han had ful gret renoun by þe fals[e] opinioun of poeple. and what þing may ben þouȝt fouler þen swiche preisyng for þilk[e] folk þat ben preised falsly. þei moten nedes han shame of hir preisynges. and yif þat folk han geten hem þank or preysyng by her desertes. what þing haþ þilk pris echid or encresed to þe conscience of wise folk þat mesuren hire good. not by þe rumour of þe poeple. but by þe soþefastnesse of conscience. and yif it seme a fair þing a man to han encresid and sprad his name. þan folweþ

ship based on prosperity instead of virtue. Adversity will turn this sort of friendship into enmity. And what greater plague can there be than the enmity of thy familiar friend? [The 5th Metur.] He who would obtain sovereign power must obtain conquest over himself, and not yield to his passions. Though your dominion extended from India to Thule, yet if thou art tormented by care thou hast no real power.

[The 6th prose.] How deceptive and deformed a thing is glory! Well did the Tragedian exclaim—
οὐδὲν δόξα
μνησται οὐδὲν
ἔχεται φθόρον
ἀνθρώπων ἀγέρας,
for the underserving have been crowned with glory and renown by popular and erring opinion. What can be more infamous than renoun founded on the prejudices of the vulgar? Those that are undeservedly praised ought to blush for shame. If a wise man gets well-merited praise it does not add to his felicity. If it be a good thing to spread

2115 *wolde* ben—wole be
2116 *put[te]*—putte
2117 *lordship[e]*—lordshype
2119 *comaundement*—comaundement;
leest isle—laest ile
2120 *hyȝt*—hyhte
2121 *puten*—putten
derk[e]—dyrke

2122 *oute*—owt
2124 *foule*—fowl
2125 *whiche*—whyeh
2126 *maker*—makers
cried[e]—cryde
2127 *he*—she
2128 *sweller*—sweller
2129 *many[e]*—many
had—MS. hadde, C. had

2129 *fals[e]*—false
2130 *fouler*—fowler
2131 *þen*—þanne
þilk[e]—thylke
2133 *or*—of
2134 *hap*—MS. haþe
þilk—thylke

abroad one's
fame, it must be
dishonourable not
to do so.
But a good name
cannot penetrate
everywhere, and
the most illus-
trious names
must be unknown
to the greatest
part of the world.

The favour of
the people is
worth but little
as it is seldom
judicious and
[* fol. 18 b.]
never permanent.
How empty and
transitory are
titles of nobility!

Gentility is
wholly foreign to
renown, and to
those who boast
of noble birth.
Nobility is fame
derived from the
merits of one's
ancestors.

If praise can give
nobility they are
noble who are
praised.

Then if thou hast
no nobility of thy
own, thou canst
not derive any
splendour from
the merits of
others.

If there be any
good in nobleness
of birth, it con-
sists alone in this,
that it imposes an
obligation upon
its possessors not
to degenerate
from the virtues
of their ancestors.

[The 6th Metre.]

All men have the
same origin.
They have one
father and one
king,
who gave the
moon her horns,
and adorned the
sun with his rays.
The same gave
the earth to man

it. þat it is demed to ben a foule þinge yif it ne be
ysprad ne encresed. but as I seide a litel her byforne.
þat syn þer mot nedes ben many folk to whiche folk þe
renoun of a man ne may nat comen. it byfalleþ þat he
þat þou wenest be glorious *and* renommed. semþ in þe
nexte parties of þe erþe to ben wiþ out glorie. *and* wiþ
out renoun. ¶ *and* certis amonges þise þinges I ne trowe
nat þat þe pris *and* grace of þe poeple nis neiþer worþi
*to ben remembrid ne comeþ of wise iugement. ne is
ferm perdurably. ¶ But now of þis name of gentilesse.
what man is it þat ne may wel seen how veyne *and*
how flittyng a þing it is. ¶ For if þe name of gentil-

esse be referred to renoun *and* clernesse of linage. þan
is gentil name but a for[e]line þing. þat is to sein to
hem þat glorifien hem of hir linage. ¶ For it semep
þat gentilesse be a maner preysynge þat comeþ of decert
of auncestres. ¶ *And* yif preysynge makeþ gentilesse
þan moten þei nedes be gentil þat ben preysed. For
whiche þing it folweþ. þat yif þou ne haue no gentilesse
of þi self. þat is to sein pris þat comeþ of þi deserte
foreine gentilesse ne makeþ þe nat gentil. ¶ But certis
yif þer be any goode in gentilesse. I trowe it be in al
oonly þis. þat it semep as þat a maner necessitee be im-
posed to gentil men. for þat þei ne sholden nat outraien
or forliuen fro þe uertues of hire noble kynrede. 2163

OMNE HOMINUM GENUS IN TERRIS.

A l þe linage of men þat ben in erþe ben of semblable
burþe. On al one is fadir of þinges. On alone
minyst[r]eþ alle þinges. ¶ He ʒaf to þe sonne hys
bemes. he ʒaf to þe moone hir hornes. he ʒaf þe men to
þe erþe. he ʒaf þe sterres to þe heuene. ¶ he encloseþ

2139 *foule þinge*—fowl thing
2140 *no—and*
byforne—byform
2144 *parties*—partye
erþe—Erthes
out—owte
2145 *out—owhte*

2148 *form*—ferme
2149 *veyne*—veyn
2150 *if—yif*
2154 *comeþ of*—comth of the
2157 *whiche*—which
2158 *pris*—preys
comeþ—comth

2160 *goode*—good
in (2)—omitted
2161 *maner*—manere
2166 *hys*—hyse
2167 *hir*—hyse

wip membres þe soules þat comen fro hys heye sete.
¶ þanne comen alle mortal folk of noble seed. whi
noysen 3e or bosten of 3oure eldris ¶ For yif þou
look[e] 3oure bygynnyng. and god 3oure auctour and
3oure makere. þan is þer no forlyued wyzt but 3if he
norisse his corage vnto vices and forlete his propre
burþe.

2175

QUID AUTEM DE CORPORIBUS.¹

But what shal I seie of delices of body. of whic[h]e
delices þe desiringes ben ful of anguisse. and þe
fulfillinges of hem ben ful of penaunce. ¶ How grete
sekenesse and how grete sorwes vnsuffrable ryzt as a
manere fruit of wickednesse ben pilke delices wont to
bryngen to þe bo[d]ies of folk þat vsen hem. ¶ Of
whiche delices I not what ioye may ben had of hir
moeuyng. ¶ But þis woot I wel þat who so euere wil
remembren hym of hys luxuries. he shal wel vndir-
stonde. þat þe issues of delices ben sorowful and sory.
¶ And yif pilke delices mowen make folk blisful. þan
by þe same cause moten pise bestes ben clepid blisful.
¶ Of whiche bestes al þe entencioun hastep to fulfille
hire bodyly iolyte. and þe gladnesse of wijf [und]
children were [an] honest þing. but it hap ben seid.
þat it is ouer myche azeins kynde þat children han ben
founden tormentours to hir fadres I not how many.
¶ Of whiche children how bitynge is enery condicioun.
It nedep nat to tellen it þe þat hast or þis tyme assaied
it. and art 3it now anguyssous. In þis approue I þe
sentence of my disciple Euridippus. þat seide þat he
þat hap no children is weleful by infortune.

2197

and adorned the
sky with stars.
He breathed into
man the breath of
life.
All men spring
from this illustri-
ous source.
Why then do they
boast of pedigree?
He alone is
ignoble who sub-
mits to vice and
forgets his noble
origin.

¹ Read *corporis*
voluptationes.

[The 7th prose.]
But what shall I
say with respect
to sensual pleas-
ures, the de-
sire of which is
full of anxiety,
and the enjoy-
ment of them full
of repentance?
What diseases
and intolerable
pains (the merited
fruits of vice) are
these delights
wont to bring
upon those who
enjoy them!
I am unable to
see what joy is to
be found in the
gratification of
them.

The remembrance
of criminal in-
dulgence brings
with it bitter
remorse.
If such things
make men happy,
then may brutes
attain to felicity,
since by their in-
stinct they are
urged to satisfy
their bodily de-
lights.

A wife and chil-
dren do not
always bring hap-
piness, for some
have found tor-
mentors in their
own offspring.
I approve of this
opinion of Euri-
pides, that he
who is childless
is happy in his
misfortune.

2168 *fro hys*—from hyse
2170 *seed*—sede
2171 *bosten*—MS. vosen, C.
bosten
2172 *look[e]*—loke
2173 *is*—his
2176 *delices*—delites
body—bodye
2177 *anguyssous*—Angwysah
2178 *grete*—gret

2179 *sekenesse*—sykenesse
grete sorwes—gret sorwes
2180 *fruit*—fruit
2182 *had*—MS. hadde, C.
had
2183 *wil*—wole
2184 *hys*—hyse
2186 *sorowful*—sorwful
sory—sorye
2186 *make*—makyu

2189 [and]—from C.
2190 [as]—from C.
hap—MS. hape
seid—MS. seide, C. seyð
2191 *myche*—mochel
2192 *many*—manye
2196 *Euridippus*—Eury-
dyppys; read Euripides
2197 *hap*—MS. hape

HABET HOC UOLUPTAS.

[The 7th Metur.]

Pleasure leaves a pain behind it.

2199

The bee gives us agreeable honey, but try to hold it, and it quickly flies, leaving its sting behind.

Euery delit hap þis. þat it anguisseþ hem wiþ prikket
þat vsen it. ¶ It resemblip to pise flying flyes þat
we clepen been. þat afre þat þe bee hap shed hys agre-
able honies he fleep away *and* styngēþ þe hertes of hem
þat ben ysmyte wiþ bytynge ouer longe holdynge. 2202

NICHIL IGITUR DUBIUM EST.

[The 8th prose.]
It appears then that happiness is not to be found in the above-mentioned external things.

[* fol. 19.]

These false ways are perplexed with many evils, as I shall presently show thee. Do you want to amass wealth, then you must take it from your neighbours.

Would you shine in dignities, then you must beg for them and disgrace yourself by a humiliating supplication.

If power be your ambition, you expose yourself to the snares of inferiors.

Do you ask for glory, to be distracted by vexations and so lose all security.

Do you prefer a voluptuous life? Think then that all men will despise him who is a thrall to his body.

They build upon a weak foundation that place bodily delights above their own reason.

Can you surpass the elephant in bulk, or the bull in strength?

Now nis it no doute þan þat pise weyes ne ben a
maner mysledyng to blisfulnesse. ne þat þei ne
mowe nat leden folke pider as þei byheten to leden
hem. ¶ But wiþ how grete harmes pise *forseide weyes
ben enlaced. ¶ I shal shewe þe shortly. ¶ For whi
yif þou enforcest þe to assemble moneye. þou most by-
reuen hym his moneye þat hap it. and yif þou wilt
shynen wiþ dignites. þou most bysechen *and* supplien
hem þat giuen þo dignitees. ¶ And yif þou coueitest
by honour to gon by-fore oþer folk þou shalt defoule þi
self by humblesse of axing. yif þou desiryst power.
þou shalt by awaites of pi subgitz anoyously be cast
vndir many periles. axest þou glorie þou shalt ben so
destrat by aspre pinges þat þou shalt forgone syker-
nesse. ¶ And yif þou wilt leden pi lijf in delices.
euery whiȝt shal dispisen þe *and* forleten þe as þou þat
art þral to þing þat is ryȝt foule *and* brutel. þat is [to]
sein seruauant to pi body. ¶ Now is it þan wel yseen
how lytel *and* how brutel possessioun þei coueiten þat
putten þe goodes of þe body abouen hire owen resoun.
¶ For mayst þou sourmounten pise olifuȝtȝ in gretnesse
or weyȝt of body. Or mayst þou ben strengre þan þe
bole. Mayst þou ben swifter þan þe tigre. biholde þe

2198 *Euery*—MS. Ouery, C. Every2199, 2200 *hap*—MS. hape
shed hys—shad hyse2203 *nis*—is2204 *mysledyng* — mysled-
ynge2206 *folke*—folk2208 *enforcest* — MS. en-
forced, C. enforcest2209 *hap*—MS. hape2209 *wilt*—wolt2211 *giuen*—yeuen2212 *gon*—MS. gone, C. gon*by-fore*—byforn*shalt*—shal2213 *by*—thorw2214 *by*—be*be*—ben2216 *destrat*—MS. destralle,
C. destrat*forgone*—forgoon2217 *wilt*—wolt2218 *whiȝt*—wyht2219 *foule*—fowl

[to]—from C.

2220 *yeuen*—seen2221 *brutel*—brotel2222 *owen*—owne2224 *weyȝt*—weyhty*stronger*—strongere2225 *swifter*—awyftore*biholde*—by-hold

spaces *and* þe stablenesse *and* þe swyfte cours of þe
 heuene. *and* stynte somtyme to wondren on foule
 pinges. þe whiche heuene certys nis nat raper for þise
 pinges to ben wondred vpon. þan for þe resoun by
 whiche it is gouerned. but þe shynynge of þi forme þat
 is to seien þe beaute of þi body. how swiftly passyng is
 it *and* how transitorie. ¶ Certis it is more flittyng
 þan þe mutabilite of floures of þe somer sesoun. For so
 as aristotil telleþ þat yif þat men hadden eyen of a
 beest þat hiȝt lynx. so þat þe lokyng of folk myȝt[e]
 percen þoruȝ þe pinges þat wiȝstonden it. who so lokid
 þan in þe entrailes of þe body of alcibiades þat was
 ful fayr in þe superfice wiȝ oute. it shulde seme ryȝt
 foule. *and* for þi yif þou semest faire. þi nature ne
 makip nat þat. but þe desceiuance of þe fieblesse of þe
 eyen þat loken. ¶ But preise þe goodes of þi body as
 moche as euer þe list. so þat þou know[e] algates þat
 what so it be. þat is to seyn of þe goodes of þi body
 whiche þat þou wondrest vpon may ben destroyed or
 dessolued by þe hete of a feuere of þre dayes. ¶ Of
 alle whiche forseide pinges I may reducen þis shortly in
 a somme. ¶ þat þise worldly goodes whiche þat ne
 mowen nat giuen þat þei byheten. ne ben nat perfit by
 þe congregacioun of alle goodes. þat þei ne ben nat
 weyes ne papes þat bryngen men to blysfulnesse ne
 maken men to ben blysful.

Art thou swifter
 than the tiger?
 Behold the im-
 mense extent of
 the heavens and
 cease to admire
 vile or lesser
 things.
 Admire what is
 still more admir-
 able, the consum-
 mate wisdom that
 governs them.
 How fleeting is
 beauty!
 It fades sooner
 than the vernal
 flowers.
 For, as Aristotle
 says, if a man
 were lynx-eyed
 and could look
 into the entrails
 of Alcibiades (so
 fair outwardly)
 he would find all
 foul and loath-
 some.

2238

Thy nature does
 not make thee
 seem beautiful,
 but the imperfect
 view of thy ad-
 mirers.
 Prize bodily
 perfections as
 much as you will,
 yet a three days'
 fever will de-
 stroy them.

2246

Worldly goods do
 not give what
 they promise, do
 not comprise
 every good, are
 not the paths to
 felicity, nor can
 of themselves
 make any one
 happy.

2251

HEU QUE MISEROS TRAMITE.

Allas whiche folie *and* whiche ignoraunce mysledip
 wandryng wrecches fro þe pape of verrey good.
 ¶ Certis ȝe ne seken no golde in grene trees. ne ȝe ne

[The 8th Metre.]

Alas! how
 through folly and
 ignorance do men
 stray from the
 path of true
 happiness!

2237 *stynle*—stynt
 2238 *whiche*—whyh
 2239 *whiche*—whyh
 2231 *seien*—seyn
 2234 *as*—omitted
 2235 *hiȝt*—hyhte
 2236 *myȝt[e]*—myhte
 2237 *alcibiades*—MS. alci-
 2238 *fayr*—fayre [ades]

2239 *þe*—omitted
shulde—sholde
 2239 *foule*—fowl
faire—fayr
ne—omitted
 2240 *desceiuance* of þe
feiblesse—deceyuable or
 the feiblesse
 2242 *moche*—mochel

2242 *knowe[e]*—knowe
 2243 *þe*—omitted
þi body—*whiche*—the body
whyh
 2247 *a*—omitted
 2252 *whiche* (both)—whyh
 2253 *pape*—pach
good—goode
 2254 *golde*—gold

Ye do not seek
gold upon trees
nor diamonds
from the vine.
Ye lay not your
nets to catch fish
upon the lofty
hills.
The hunter goes
not to the Tyr-
rene waters to
hunt the roe.
Men know where
to look for white
pearls, and for the
fish that yields the
purple dye.

2263

They know where
the most delicate
of the finny race
abound and where
the fierce sea-urch-
in is to be found.
But where the
Sovereign Good
abides blinded
mortals never
know, but plunge
into the earth
below to look for
that which has its
dwelling in the
heavens.

[* fol. 19 b.]
What doom do the
silly race deserve?
May they pursue
such false joys,
and having ob-
tained them, too
late find out the
value of the true.

gadren [nat] precious stones in þe vines. ne 3e ne
hiden nat 3oure gynnes in hey3e mountaignes to kachen
fisshe of whiche 3e may maken ryche festes. and yif
3ow lykep to hunte to roos. 3e ne gon nat to þe foordes
of þe water þat hyzt tyrene. and ouer þis men knowen
wel þe crikes and þe cauernes of þe see yhidd in þe
floodes. and knowen eke whiche water is most plentiuos
of white perles. and knowen whiche water habundep
most of rede purple. þat is to seyen of a maner shel-
fisshe with whiche men dien purple. and knowen
whiche strondes habounden most of tendre fisshes or
of sharpe fisshes þat hyzten echynnys. but folk suffren
hem self to ben so blynde þat hem ne recchip nat to
knowe where þilk[e] goodes ben yhidd whiche þat þei
coueiten but ploungen hem in erpe and seken þere
þilke goode þat sourmountep þe heuene þat bereþ þe
sterres. ¶ what *preyere may I make þat be digne to
þe nice þouztis of men. but I preyre þat þei coueiten
ryches and honours so þat whan þei han geten þo
false goodes wiþ greet trauayle þat þerby þei mowe
knowen þe verray goodes. 2275

HACTENUS MENDACIS FORMAM.

[The 9th prose.]

P. I have been
describing the
form of counter-
feit happiness, and
if you have con-
sidered it at-
tentively I shall
proceed to give
you a perfect view
of the true.

B. I now see that
there is no suffi-
ciency in riches, no
power in royalty,
no esteem in
dignities, nor
nobility in re-

IT suffisip þat I haue shewed hider to þe forme of
false wilfulnessse. so þat yif þou look[e] now clerely
þe ordre of myn entencioun requerip from hennes forþe
to shewen þe verray wilfulnessse. ¶ For quod. I. (b) [I.]
se wel now þat suffisaunce may nat comen by richesse. ne
power by realmes. ne reuerence by dignitees. ne gentil-
esse by glorie. ne ioye by delices. and (p) hast þou wel
knownen quod she þe cause whi it is. Certis me semeþ

2266 *hoy3e*—the hyye2267 *kachen*—kache2267 *fisshe*—fyssh2268 *hunte*—honte2268 *roos*—Roos2269 *hyzt*—hyhte2269 *crikes*—brykes2270 *yhidd*—MS. yhidde, C. I.

hyd

2261, 2262 *whiche*—whyh2263 *shelfisshe*—shelle fysh2264, 2265 *whiche*—whyh2264 *dien*—deyen2265 *of*—with2266 *echynnys*—MS. eth-

ynnys, C. Echynnys

2268 *yhidd*—MS. yhidde, C.

I-hydd

2270 *goode*—good2271 *make*—maken2273 *ryches*—Rychesse2277 *wilfulnessse*—weleful-

nesse

look[e]—loke

clerely—clerly [nesse]

2279 *wilfulnessse*—weleful-

For—For-sothe

[I.]—from C.

2280 *richesse*—Rychesses2281 *realmes*—Reames

quod .I. pat .I. se hem ryzt as þouȝ it were þoruȝ a litel
clifte. but me were leuer knowen hem more openly of
þe. Certys quod she þe resoun is al redy ¶ For
þilk þing þat symply is on þing wiþ outen ony
diuisioun. þe errour *and* folie of mankynde departeþ
and diuidiþ it. *and* misleidiþ it *and* transporteþ from
verray *and* perfit goode. to goodes þat ben false *and*
inperfit. ¶ But seye me þis. wenest þou þat he þat hap
nede of power þat hym ne lakkeþ no þing. Nay quod
.I. ¶ Certis quod she þou seist aryzt. For yif so be
þat þer is a þing þat in any partie be fieble of power.
Certis as in þat it most[e] nedes be nedy of foreine
helpe. ¶ Riȝt so it is quod .I. Suffisaunce and power
ben þan of on kynde ¶ So semeþ it quod I. ¶ And
demyst þou quod she þat a þing þat is of þis manere.
þat is to seine suffisaunt *and* myȝty auȝt[e] to ben dis-
pised. or ellys þat it be ryzt digne of reuerences abouen
alle þinges. ¶ Certys quod I it nys no doute þat it
nis ryzt worþi to ben reuerenced. ¶ Lat vs quod she þan
adden reuerence to suffisaunce *and* to power ¶ So þat
we demen þat þise þre þinges ben alle o þing. ¶ Certis
quod I lat vs adden it. yif we willen graunten þe soþe.
what demest þou þan quod she is þat a dirke þing *and*
nat noble þat is suffisaunt reuerent *and* myȝty. or ellys
þat is ryzt clere *and* ryzt noble of celebrete of renoun.
¶ Considere þan quod she as we han grauntid her by-
forne. þat he þat ne hap ne[de] of no þing *and* is most
myȝty *and* most digne of honour yif hym nedid any
clernesse of renoun whiche clernesse he myȝt[e] nat
graunten of hym self. ¶ So þat for lakke of þilke
clerenesse he myȝt[e] seme febler on any syde or þe

nown, nor joy in
carnal pleasures.
I have a
glimpse of the
cause of all this,
but I should like
a more distinct
view. P. The
cause is obvious—
for that which is
by nature one and
indivisible human
ignorance separ-
ates and divides,
and reverses the
true order of
things. Does that
state which needs
nothing stand in
need of power? B.
I should say no. P.
Right! That which
wants power needs
external aid. B. That
is true! P. Suffi-
ciency and power
therefore are of
one nature. B. It
seems so indeed.
2297

P. Are power and
sufficiency to be
despised? Are
they not rather
worthy of uni-
versal respect?
B. They are
doubtless highly
estimable. P. Add
respect to suffi-
ciency and power,
and consider all
three as one and
the same thing.
B. I see no objec-
tion to that view.
P. But can that be
obscure and ig-
noble which pos-
sesses three such
attributes? Is it
not noble and
worthy of a shin-
ing reputation?
He who is most
powerful and
worthy of renown
—if he lack fame
which he cannot
give to himself,
must (by this de-
fect) seem in some
measure more
weak and abject.
He that is suffi-
ciently mighty
and deemed will
have necessarily

2287 þilk—thylke
on—o
2290 goode—good
2291 seye—sey
hap—MS. hape
2294 fieble—feblers
2295 most[e]—mot
2296 helpe—help
2297 on—o

2298 demyst þou—demesthow
2299 seine—seyn
auȝt[e]—owite
2300 reuerences—Reuerence
2302 nis ryzt—is ryht
2304 alle—al
2306 willen—wolen
2306 dirke—dyrk
2306 clere—cler

2308 of celebrete—by celo-
bryte
2310 hap—MS. hape
2312 whyche—whyoh
myȝt[e]—myhte
2314 clerenesse—clernesse
myȝt[e]—myhte
febler—the feblers

an illustrious name. *B.* I cannot deny it, for reputation seems inseparable from the advantages you have just mentioned.

P. Therefore Renown differs in no wise from

2320

the three above-mentioned attributes. And if any one then stands in need of no external aid, can have all he wants, and is illustrious and respected—in not his condition very agreeable and pleasant? *B.* I cannot conceive how such a one can have grief or trouble. *P.* It must then be a state of happiness; and we may also affirm that sufficiency, power, nobility, differ only in name, but

2330

not in substance. *B.* It is a necessary consequence. *P.* The depravity of mankind then divides that which is essentially indivisible; and, seeking for a part of that which has no parts, they miss the entire thing [** fol. 20.*] which they so much desire.

2338

B. How is that? *P.* He that seeks riches in order to avoid poverty, is not solicitous about power; he prefers meanness and obscurity, and denies himself many natural pleasures that he may not lessen his heaps of pelf.

more outcaste. *Glosa.* *pis* is to seyne nay. ¶ For who so *pat* is suffisaunt *myzty* and reuerent. clernesse of renoun folweþ of þe forseide *pinges*. he haþ it alredy of hys suffisaunce. boice. I may nat quod I denye it. ¶ But I mot graunten as it is. *pat* *pis* *ping* be ryzt celebrable by clernesse of renoun and noblesse. ¶ þan folweþ it quod she *pat* we adden clernesse of renoun to þe þre forseide *pinges*. so *pat* þer ne be amonges hem no difference. and *pis* is a consequente quod .I. *pis* *ping* þan quod she *pat* ne haþ no nede of no foreine *ping*. and *pat* may don alle *pinges* by his strengþes. and *pat* is noble and honourable. nis nat *pat* a myrie *ping* and a ioyful. boice. but wenest quod I *pat* any sorow *myzt[e]* comen to *pis* *ping* *pat* is swiche. ¶ Certys I may nat pinke. *P.* ¶ þanne moten we graunt[e] quod she *pat* *pis* *ping* be ful of gladnesse yif þe forseide *pinges* be soþe. ¶ And also certys mote we graunten. *pat* suffisaunce power noblesse reuerence and gladnesse ben only dyuerse bynames. but hir substaunce haþ no diuersite. Boice. It mot nedely be so quod .I. *P.* pilke *pinge* þan quod she *pat* is oon and simple in his nature. þe wikkednesse of men departiþ it *diuidiþ it. and whan þei enforcen hem to gete partie of a *ping* *pat* ne haþ no part. þei ne geten hem neiþer pilk[e] partie *pat* nis none. ne þe *ping* al hole *pat* þei ne desire nat. .b. In whiche manere quod .I. *p.* pilke man quod she *pat* sekeþ rychesse to fleen pouerte. he ne trauayleþ hym nat to for to gete power for he haþ leuer ben dirk and vile. and eke wiþdraweþ from hym selfe many naturel delitz for he nolde lesen þe moneye *pat* he haþ as-

2315 *seyne*—seyn2317 *haþ*—MS. hape2324 *haþ*—MS. hape2325 *his*—hyse2326 *myrie*—mery2327 *wenest*—whennes2328 *sorow myzt[e]*—sorwe*myhte*2329 *graunt[e]*—graunte2331 *be*—ben2331 *also certys*—certes also2333 *haþ*—MS. hape2334 *nedely*—nedly2335 *pinge*—thing2337 *gete*—geten2338 *haþ*—MS. hape*pilk[e]*—thilke2339 *nons*—non*hole*—hool2340 *whiche*—whyeh2341 *rychesse*—Rychesse*fleen*—MS. sleen, C. fien2342 *leuer*—leuer2343 *vile*—vyl*selfe*—self2344 *delitz*—delices*lesen*—lese*haþ*—MS. hape

sembled. but certis in þis manere he ne getiþ hym nat
suffisaunce þat power forletip. and þat moleste prekep.
and þat filþe makeþ outcaste. and þat derknesse hideþ.
and certis he þat desireþ only power he wastip and
scatriþ rychesse and dispiseþ delices and eke honour
þat is wiþ out power. ne he ne preiseþ glorie no þing.
¶ Certys þus seest þou wel þat many þingus failen to
hym. for he haþ somtyme faute of many necessites.
and many anguysses biten hym ¶ and whan he may
nat don þo defautes away. he forleteþ to ben myzty.
and þat is þe þing þat he most desireþ. and ryzt þus
may I make semblable resouns of honours and of glorie
and of delices. ¶ For so as euery of þise forseide
þinges is þe same þat þise oþer þinges ben. þat is to
sein. al oon þing. who so þat euer sekep to geten þat
oon of þise and nat þat oþer. he ne geteþ nat þat he
desireþ. Boice. ¶ what seist þou þan yif þat a man
coueiteþ to geten alle þise þinges to gider. P. Certys
quod she .I. wolde seie þat he wolde geten hym soue-
reynne blisfulnes. but þat shal he nat fynde in þo þinges
þat .I. haue shewed þat ne mowe nat ȝeuen þat þei hy-
heten. boice. Certys no quod .I. ¶ þan quod she ne
sholden men nat by no weye seken blysfulnesse in
swiche þinges as men wenen þat þei ne mowe
ȝeuen but o þing senglely of alle þat men seken. I
graunt[e] wel quod .I. ne no soþer þing ne may nat
ben said. P. ¶ Now hast þou þan quod she þe forme
and þe causes of false welefulnesse. ¶ Now turne and
flitte þe eyen of þi pouzt. for þere shalt þou seen an oon
pilk verray blysfulnesse þat I haue byhyzt þee. b.
Certys quod .I. it is cler and opyn. pouz þat it were to
a blynde man. and þat shewedest þou me [ful wel] a

He who lacks
power, is pricked
with trouble, and
rendered an out-
cast and obscure
by his sordid
ways, does not
possess suffi-
ciency. He who
only aims at power
squanders his
riches, and
despises delights
and honours unac-
companied by
power. Such a one
must be subject
to many anxieties.
And when he can-
not get rid of these
evils he ceases to
have what he most
desired—power.
In the same way
honour, glory,
and pleasure, are
all inseparable; he
that seeks one
without the other
will fail to obtain
his desires.
B. What then if a
man should
desire to gain
them all at once?
P. He would
then indeed
2361

desire perfect
felicity—but can
he ever expect to
find it in the ac-
quisitions above
mentioned, which
do not perform
what they
promise?
B. No, surely!
P. Then happi-
ness is not to be
sought in these
things which are
falsely supposed
capable of satisfy-
ing our desires?
B. I confess it,
and nothing can
be more truly
affirmed than this.
Turn your mind's
eye upon the
reverse of all this
false felicity
and you will
perceive the true
happiness.
B. It is very clear,
and I had a com-
plete view of it
when you explain-
ed to me the causes
of its counterfeit.

2346 prekep—prykketh
2347 derknesse—dyrknesse
2349 scatriþ—schatereth
delices—delycy
2350 wiþ out—with owte
2351 many—manye
2352 hap—MS. hape

2352 faute—defaute
2353 may—ne may
2354 don—MS. done, C. don
2355 make—maken
2357 forseide—MS. sorseide
2363 souereyne—souercyn
2365 mowe—mowen

2368 wenen—wene
mowe—mowen
2370 graunt(e)—grauante
soþer—soþere
2371 said—MS. saide, C. sayd
2376 [ful wel]—from C.

True felicity consists in a state of sufficiency, of power, and honour—as well as of a shining reputation and every desirable pleasure: and I must confess that true felicity is that which is bestowed by these advantages, as they are in reality all one and the same.

P. O my nursing, how happy are

2385

you in this conviction, provided you add but one limitation.

B. What is that?

P. Thinkest thou that any thing in this world can confer this happiness? (the sovereign good).

B. I think not; for nothing can be desirable beyond such a state of perfection.

P. These imperfect things above mentioned only confer the shadow of the supreme good, or at most only an imperfect felicity, but they cannot bestow true and perfect happiness.

B. I quite agree with you.

P. Then, knowing the difference between true and false felicity you must now learn where to look for

2401

this supreme felicity.

P. But, as Plato

(* fol. 20 b.)

says that even in the least things the Divine assistance ought to be implored, what ought we do, to render us worthy of so important a discovery as the true source and seat of the sovereign good?

lytel her byforne. whan pou enforcedest þe to shewe me þe causes of þe false blysfulnesse ¶ For but yif I be bygiled. þan is pilke þe verray perfit blisfulnesse þat perfityly makip a man suffisaunt. myzty. honourable noble. and ful of gladnesse. and for þou shalt wel knowe þat I haue wel vndirstonden pise pinges wip inne myne herte. I knowe wel pilke blisfulnesse þat may verrayly zeuen on of þe forseide pinges syn þei ben al oon .I. knowe douteles þat pilke ping is þe fulle of blysfulnesse. P.

O my nurry quod she by þis oppinioun quod she I sey[e] þat þou art blisful yif þou putte þis þer to þat I shal seine. what is þat quod .I. ¶ Trowest pou þat þer be any ping in þis erpely mortal toumblyng pinges þat may bryngen þis estat. Certys quod I trowe it nat. and þou hast shewed me wel þat ouer pilke goode þer is no ping more to ben desired. P. pise pinges þan quod she. þat is to seyne erpely suffisaunce and .power. and swiche pinges eyþer þei semen likenesse of verray goode. or ellys it semep þat þei zeuen to mortal folk a maner of goodes þat ne ben nat perfit. ¶ But pilke goode þat is verray and perfit. þat may þei nat zeuen. boice. I. accorde me wel quod .I. þan quod she for as moche as þou hast knowen whiche is pilke verray blisfulnesse. and eke whiche pilke pinges ben þat lien falsly blisfulnesse. þat is to seyne. þat by desceit semen verray goodes. ¶ Now byhouep þe to knowen *whennes and where þou mowe seek[e] pilke verray blisfulnesse. ¶ Certys quod I þat desijr I gretly and haue abiden longe tyme to herkene it. ¶ But for as moche quod she as it likeþ to my disciple plato in his book of in thimeo. þat in ryzt lytel pinges men sholde bysechen þe helpe of god. ¶ what ingest þou þat be

2377 byforne—by-forn

2378 blysfulnesse — MS. blyndenesse, C. blysfulnesse

2386 qf—omitted

2388 nurry—norye

2387 sey[e]—seye

2388 seine—seyn

2389 þis—thise

2390 nat—nawht

2393 seyne—sey

2395 zeuen—yeue

2397 goode—good

2399 whiche—which

2401 seyne—seyn

2402 knowen—knowe

2403 seek[e]—seke

2406 herkene—herknen

2407 sholde—sholden

2408 bysechen—by-shechen

helpe—help

[now] to done so þat we may deserue to fynde þe sete of þilke souereyne goode. *B. ¶ Certys quod .I. I. deme* þat we shulle clepen to þe fadir of alle goodes. ¶ For wiþ outen hym nis þer no þing founden aryzt. þou seist a-ryzt quod she. and bygan on-one to syngen ryzt þus.

O QUI PERPETUA.

O þou fadir creatour of heuene *and* of erþes þat gouernest þis worlde by perdurable resoun þat comaundist þe tymes for to gon from tyme þat age had[de] bygynnyng. þou þat dwellest þi self ay stedfast *and* stable *and* ziuest alle oþer þinges to ben moeued. ne forein causes necesseden þe neuer to compoune werke of floterynge mater. but only þe forme of souereyne goode y-set wiþ inne [þe] wiþ outen envie þat moeued[e] þe frely. þou þat art alþerfairest beryng þe faire worlde in þi þouzt. formedest þis worlde to þe likenessþ semblable of þat faire worlde in þi þouzt. þou drawest alle þinges of þi souereyne ensampler. *and* comaundedist þat þis worlde perfitlyche ymaked haue frely *and* absolut hyse perfit parties. ¶ þou byndest þe elementz by noumbres proporcionables. þat þe colde þinges mowen accorde wiþ þe hote þinges. *and* þe drye þinges wiþ þe moyst þinges. þat þe fire þat is purest ne fleye nat ouer heye. ne þat þe heuynesse ne drawe nat adoun ouer lowe þe erþes þat ben plounged in þe watres. ¶ þou knytttest to-gidre þe mene soule of treble kynde moeuyng alle þinges. *and* diuidest it by membres accordyng. ¶ And whan it is þus diuided it hap assembled a moeuyng in two roundes. ¶ It goþ to tourne

B. Let us invoke the Father of all things. You are right, said Philosophy, and thus she sang:—

O Father and Maker of heaven and earth, by whose eternal reason the world is governed, and by whose supreme [The 5th Metur.] command Time flows from the birth of ages. Thou, firm and unchanged thyself, makest all things else to move! Thy sovereign will to floating matter gave its various forms, impelled by no exterior causes, but by the Idea of the
2419

Best in thy great mind conceived void of malice. Fairest thyself bearing the world's figure in thy thought, thou didst create the world after that prototype, and dost draw all things from the image of the fair Supreme, and dost command that this world should have perfect parts. By harmonious measures thou dost bind fast the elements, so that there is no discordance between things cold and hot, or between the moist and the dry. That the fire may not fly too high, and that weight may not press the earth and water lower than they are now placed, thou didst join the Middle Soul (of a three-fold nature) moving all things, and then by agreeing

2409 [now]—from C.
2410 *souereyne goode*—verray good
2411 *shulle*—shollen to—omitted
2413 *on-one*—anon
2415 *worlde*—world
2416 *from*—age—from syn þat age
had[de]—hadde
2417 *stedfast*—stedefast

2418 *oþer*—oother
2419 *forein*—foreyne
werke—werk
2420 *souereyne goode*—souereyn good
2421 *y-set*—MS. y-sette, C. Iset
wiþ inne—with in [þe]—the
wiþ outen—with owte
moeued[e]—moeuede

2422 *alþerfairest*—alder-fayrest
2423 *24-26 worlde*—world
2423 *likkenesse*—lyknesse
2426 *and absolut*—C. omits
2427 *hyse*—hys
2430 *fire*—fyr
fleye—fle
2431 *draue*—drawen
2435 *hap*—MS hape
2436 *goþ*—MS. goþe

numbers didst resolve it. When that is done, cut into two orbe, it moves about returning to itself, and then encompassing the profound mind doth by that fair idea turn the heaven. Thou by such causes dost raise all souls and lesser lives, and adaptest them to their light vehicles. Thou sowest them in heaven and earth, and they return to thee by thy kind law like a recolling flame. O Father, elevate our souls and let them behold thy august throne. Let them behold the fountain of all good. Dispel the mists of sense, remove the weights of earth-born cares, and in thy splendour shine (in our minds). For thou art ever clear, and to the [The 10th prose.] good art peace and rest. He who looks on thee beholds beginning support, guide, path and goal, combined. Now that thou hast had a faithful representation of future felicity as well as of the true happiness, I shall show thee in what the Perfection of Happiness consists. Our best plan will be to inquire whether there be in nature such a good as thou hast lately defined, lest we be deceived by the vanity of Imagination and be carried beyond the truth of the matter subjected to our inquiry.

azein to hym owen self. *and* enviroñeþ a fulle deep pouzt. *and* tourniþ þe heuene by semblable ymage. þou by euenlyk causes enhaunsest þe soules *and* þe lasse liues *and* ablynge hem heye by lyzt[e] cartes. þou sewest hem in to heuene *and* in to erþe. *and* whan þei ben conuertid to þe by þi benigne lawe. ¶ þou makest hem retorne azeine to þe by azein ledyng fjr. ¶ O fadir yif þou to þi pouzt to stien vp in to þi streite sete. *and* graunte [hym] to enviroune þe welle of good. *and* þe lyzte yfounde graunte hym to ficchen þe clere syztes of hys corage in þe. ¶ *And* scatre þou *and* to-breke [thow] þe weyztēs *and* þe cloudes of erpely heuynesse. *and* shyne þou by þi bryztēs. for þou art clernesse þou art peisible to debonaire folke. ¶ þou þi self art bygynnyng. berere. ledere. paþ *and* terme to lōke on þe [þat] is oure ende. *Glose.* 2452

QUONIAM IGITUR QUI SCIT.¹ [1 Read que sit.]

FOR as moche þan as þou hast seyn. whiche is þe forme of goode þat nys nat perfit. *and* whiche is þe forme of goode þat is perfit. now trowe I þat it were goode to shewe in what þis perfeccioun of blisfulnesse is set. *and* in þis ping I trowe þat we sholden first enquire forto witen yif þat any swiche manere goode as þilke goode þat þou hast diffinissed a lytel her byforne. þat is to seine souereyne goode may be founden in þe nature of pinges. For þat veyne ymaginacioun of pouzt ne desceiue vs nat. *and* putte vs oute of þe sopefastnesse of þilke pingē þat is summyttid to vs. þis is to seyne. but it may nat ben denoyed þat þilke goode ne is. ¶ *and* þat it nis ryzt as a welle of alle goodes. ¶ For

2437 *owen*—C. omits
2438 *tourniþ*—MS. *tourniþe*
2439 *euenlyk*—eueñe lyke
2440 *lyzt[e]*—lyhte
2442 *benigne*—bygynnyng
2444 *yif*—yīue
2445 *þi streite*—the streyte
2446 *[hym]*—from C.
2446 *lyzte*—lyht

2448 *[thow]*—from C.
2449 *bryztēs*—bryhtnesse
2451 *paþ*—MS. *paþe*; *paath*
2452 *[þat]*—that
2453 *whiche*—which [good]
2454 - 55 - 56 - 58 - 59 *goode*—
2454 *whiche*—whych
2457 *set*—MS. *sette*, C. *set*
2460 *seine*—seyn

2460 *souereyne goode*—souereyn good
2460 *be founden*—ben fownde
2461 *veyne*—veyn
2463 *þis is to seyne*—C. omits
2464 *denoyed*—MS. *deuoyd*—
ed. C. *denoyed*
2464 *goode*—good
2465 *qf*—MS. of of

al þing þat is cleped *inperfit*. is proued *inperfit* by þe amenusynge of *perfeccioun*. or of þing þat is *perfit*. and her of comeþ it. þat in euery þing general. yif þat. þat men seen any þing þat is *inperfit* *certys in þilke general þer mot ben somme þing þat is *perfit*. ¶ For yif so be þat *perfeccioun* is don away. men may nat pinke nor seye fro whennes þilke þing is þat is cleped *inperfit*. ¶ For þe nature of þinges ne token nat her bygynnyng of þinges amenused and *inperfit*. but it procediþ of þingus þat ben al hool. and absolut. and descendep so doune in to outerest þinges and in to þingus empty and wiþ oute fruyt. but as I haue shewed a litel her byforne. þat yif þer be a blisfulnesse þat be frele and vein and *inperfit*. þer may no man doute. þat þer nys som blisfulnesse þat is sad stedfast and *perfit*. b. þis is concludid quod I fermely and soþefastly. P. But considere also quod she in wham þis blisfulnesse enhabiteþ. þe commune acordaunce and conceite of þe corages of men proueþ and graunteþ þat god prince of alle þingus is good. ¶ For so as no þing ne may ben þouzt bettre þan god. it may nat ben doutid þan þat [he þat] no þing is bettre. þat he nys good. ¶ Certys resoun sheweþ þat god is so goode þat it proueþ by verray force þat *perfit* goode is in hym. ¶ For yif god ne is swiche. he ne may nat ben prince of alle þinges. for certis som þing possessyng in hym self *perfit* goode sholde ben more þan god. and [it] sholde seme þat þilke þing were first and elder þan god. ¶ For we han shewed apertly þat alle þinges þat ben *perfit*. ben first or þinges þat ben *inperfit*. ¶ And for þi for as moche as [that] my resoun or my proces ne go nat away wiþoute an ende. we ouzt[e] to graunten þat þe souereyne god is ryzt ful of

The sovereign good does exist, and is the source of all other good. When we say that a thing is *inperfit* we [* fol. 21.] assert that there is something else of its kind *perfit*. Nature takes not her origin from things diminished and imperfect; but, proceeding from an entire and absolute substance, descends into the remotest and most fruitless things. If there be an imperfect and fading felicity there must also be one stable and perfect. But now consider wherein this felicity resides. That God is the governor of all things is proved by the universal opinion of all men. For since nothing may be conceived better

than God, then He who has no equal in goodness must be good. Reason clearly demonstrates (1) that God is good, and (2) that the sovereign good exists in him. If it were not so He could not be the Ruler of all things, for there would be some other being excelling him who possesses the supreme good and who must have existed before Him. And we have already shown that the perfect precedes the imperfect; wherefore, that our reasonings may not run on with infinity, we must confess that the Supreme God is full of perfect and consummate good.

2466 al þing—alle thing
2468 her of comeþ—ther of comht
2470 somme—som
2471 don—MS. done, C. don
2473 token—look
2475 hool—hoolle
2476 doune—down

2477 wiþ oute fruyt—with owten fruit
2480 stedfast—stydefast
2481 fermely—MS. feynely, C. fermely
soþefastly—sothfastly
2486 [he þat]—from C.
is bettre—nis bettre

2488-89-91 goods—good
2489 swiche—awygh
2492 [it]—from C.
seme—semen
2493 elder—elders
2496 [that]—from C.
2496 proces—processes
2497 ouzt[e]—owcn

And as we have seen that the perfect good is true happiness, it follows that the true felicity resides in the Supreme Divinity. But let us see how we can firmly and irrefragably prove that the Supreme God contains in his own nature a plenitude of perfect and consummate good. If you think that God has received this good from without, then you must believe that the giver of this

2508

good is more excellent than God the receiver. But we have concluded that there is nothing more excellent than God. But if this supreme good is in Him by nature, and is nevertheless of a different substance, we cannot conceive, since God is the author of all things, what could have united these two substances differing one from another. Lastly, a thing which essentially differs from another cannot be the same with that from which it is supposed to differ. Consequently, what in its nature

2522

differs from the chief good cannot be the supreme good. But it would be impious and profane thus to conceive of God, since nothing can excel Him in goodness and worth.

souereyne perfit goode. and we han establisshed þat þe souereyne goode is verrey blisfulnesse. þan mot it nedes ben [þat verray blysfulnesse is] yset in souereyne god.

B. þis take I wel quod .I. ne þis ne may nat be wipseid in no manere. ¶ But I preie þe quod she see now how þou mayst preuen holily and wip-outen corrupcioun þis þat I haue seid. þat þe souereyne god is ryzt ful of souereyne goode. [In whych manere quod .I.] wenest þou ouzt quod she þat þis prince of alle þinges haue ytake pilke souereyne good any where þan of hym self.

¶ of whiche souereyne goode men proueþ þat he is ful ryzt as þou myztest piken. þat god þat haþ blisfulnesse in hym self. and þat ilke blisfulnesse þat is in hym were diuers in substaunce. ¶ For yif þou wene þat god haue receyued pilke good oute of hym self. þou mayst wene þat he þat 3af pilke good to god. be more goode þan is god. ¶ But I am byknowen and confesse and þat ryzt dignely þat god is ryzt worþi abouen alle þinges. ¶ And yif so be þat þis good be in hym by nature. but þat it is diuers from [hym] by wenyng resoun. syn we speke of god prince of alle þinges feyne who so feyne may. who was he þat [hath] conioined pise diuers þinges to-gidra. and eke at þe last[e] se wel þat o þing þat is diuers from any þing. þat pilke þing nis nat þat same þing. fro whiche it is vndirstonden to ben diuers. þan folweþ it. þat pilke þing þat by hys nature is dyuers from souereyne good. þat þat þing nys nat souereyne good. but certys þat were a felonous corsednesse to piken þat of hym. þat no þing nis more worþe. For alwey of alle þinges. þe nature

2498 *goode*—good2499 *souereyne goode*—sou-

reyn good

2500 [þat—*is*]—from C.

yset—MS. ysette, C. set

2501 *be*—ben

wipseid—MS. wipseide, C. withseid

2503 *wip-outen*—with-owte2504 *seid*—MS. seide, C. seyð2505 *souereyne goode*—sou-

reyn good

2505 [In—I]—from C.

2506 *ouzt*—awht2507 *þan of*—owt of2508 *whiche*—whyth*souereyne goode*—souereyn good2509 *haþ*—MS. haue2510 *þat ilke*—thilke2511 *were*—weren2514 *goode*—worth2517 *from*—fro

[hym]—from C.

2518 *feyne*—faigne2519 *feyne*—feigne

[hath]—from C.

2520 *last[e]*—laste2521 *o*—a2522 *whiche*—whyth2524 *from*—fro2527 *nis*—is

of hem ne may nat ben better þan his byggyunyng.

¶ For whiche I may concluden by ryȝt uerray resoun.

þat þilke þat is byggyunyng of alle þinges. þilke same

þing is good in his substaunce. *B.* þou hast seid ryȝt-

fully *quod* .I. *P.* But we han graunted *quod* she þat

souereyne good is blysfulnes. þat is soþe *quod* .I. þan

quod she mote we nedes graunten *and* confessen þat

þilke same souereyne goode be god. ¶ Certys **quod*

.I. I ne may nat denye ne wiȝstonde þe resouns pur-

posed. and I see wel þat it folweþ by strengþe of þe

premisses. ¶ Loke now *quod* she yif þis be proued

[yit] more fermely þus. ¶ þat þer ne mowen nat ben

two souereyne goodes þat ben diuerse amo[n]ges hem

self. þat on is nat þat þat oþer is. þan [ne] mowen

neiper of hem ben perfit. so as eyþer of hem lakkiþ to

oþir. but þat þat nis nat perfit men may seen apertly

þat it nis nat souereyne. þe þinges þan þat ben

souereynely goode ne mowen by no wey ben diuerse.

¶ But I haue wel conclude þat blisfulnesse *and* god ben

[the] souereyne goode. For whiche it mot nedes be þat

souereyne blisfulnesse is souerey[ne] dyuynite. ¶ No

þing *quod* I nis more soþefast þan þis ne more ferme by

resoun. ne a more worþi þing þan god may nat ben

concluded. *P.* vpon þise þinges þan *quod* she. ryȝt as

þise geometriens whan þei han shewed her *proposiciouns*

ben wont to bryngen in þinges þat þei clepen porismes

or declaraciouns of forseide þinges. ryȝt so wil I ȝeue

þe here as a corolarie or a mede of coroune. For whi.

for as moche as by þe getyng of blisfulnesse men ben

maked blysful. *and* blisfulnesse is diuinite. ¶ þan is

it manifest *and* open þat by þe getyng of diuinite men

ben makid blisful. ryȝt as by þe getyng of iustice . . .

In fact, nothing can exist whose nature is better than its origin. We may therefore conclude that the Author of all things is really and substantially the supreme Good. *B.* Most rightly said!

P. But you have owned that true felicity is the sovereign good; then you must also

[* fol. 21 b.] grant that God is that true felicity. *B.* Your conclusions follow from your premises. *P.* Let us see whether we cannot prove this more convincingly by considering it in this view, that there cannot be two sovereign goods which differ in themselves.

For it is plain that of the goods that differ one cannot be what the other is; wherefore neither of them

2545

can be perfect where one wants the other. That which is not perfect cannot be the supreme good. Neither can the chief good be essentially different. But it has been shown that God and happiness are the chief good, wherefore the sovereign felicity and the Supreme Divinity are one and the same. Following then the examples of geometers who deduce their consequences from their propositions, I shall deduce to thee something like a corollary as follows:—Because by the attainment of felicity men become happy, and

2523 *better*—bette
2529 *whiche*—whyh
2531 *seid*—MS. seide, C. seyð
2533 *soþe*—soth
2534 *mote*—moten
2539 [yif]—from C.
2541 *is* (1)—nis

2541 *oþer*—othre
[ne]—from C.
2546 *conclude*—concluded
2547 [the] from C.
2548 *goode*—good
2549 *soþefast*—sothfast
2549 *ferme*—MS. forme, C.

ferme
2552 *proposiciouns*—MS. proporsious, C. proporsious
2553 *porismes*—MS. poisimes, C. poryames
2554 *wil*—wole

as felicity is the same as Divinity itself, therefore by the attainment of Divinity men are made happy. But as by the participation of justice or of wisdom men become just or wise, so by partaking of Divinity they must necessarily, and by parity of reason, become gods.

Every happy man then is a god. But by nature there is only *One*; but by participation of Divine essence there may be many gods. But as happiness seems to be an assemblage of many things, ought we not to consider whether these several things constitute conjointly the body of

2574

happiness, or whether there is not some one of these particular things that may complete the substance or essence of it, and to which all the rest have a relation?

B. Illustrate this matter by proper examples.
P. As you grant that happiness is a good, you may say the same of all the other goods; for perfect sufficiency is identical with supreme felicity; so is supreme power, likewise high rank, a shining reputation, and perfect pleasure. What say you, then; are all these things, sufficiency, power, and the rest, to be considered as constituent parts of felicity? or are they to be referred to the sovereign good as their source and principal?

2563 *oon*—*O*
2564 *letteþ*—*let*
2566 *faire*—*fayr*
2567 *porisme*—MS. *pousme*,
O. *porisme*
2572 [*pat*]—from *C*.
2573 *maner*—*manere*
by—*be*

and by þe getyng of sapience þei ben maked wise. ¶ Ryzt so nedes by þe semblable resoun whan þei han getyn diuinite þei ben maked goddys. þan is euery blisful man god. ¶ But certis by nature. þer nys but oon god. but by þe participaciouns of diuinite þere ne letteþ ne disturbeþ no þing þat þer ne ben many goddes. ¶ þis is quod .I. a faire þing and a precious. ¶ Clepe it as þou wolt. be it corolarie or porisme or mede of coroune or declarynges ¶ Certys quod she no þing nis fairer. þan is þe þing þat by resoun sholde ben added to pise forseide þinges. what þing quod .I. ¶ So quod she as it semeþ þat blisfulnesse contenþ many þinges. it were forto witen wheþir [*þat*] alle pise þinges maken or conioignen as a maner body of blysfulnesse by diuersite of parties or [*of*] membris. Or ellys yif any of alle pilke þingus be swyche þat it acomplise by hym self þe substaunce of blisfulnesse. so þat alle pise oper þinges ben referred and brouzt to blisfulnesse. þat is to seyne as to þe chief of hem. ¶ I wolde quod I þat þou makedest me clerly to vndirstonde what þou seist. and þat þou recordest me þe forseide þinges. ¶ Hauē I nat iuged quod she. þat blisfulnesse is goode. 3is forsoþe quod .I. and þat souereyne goode. ¶ Adde þan quod she pilke goode þat is maked blisfulnes to alle þe forseide þinges. ¶ For pilke same blisfulnesse þat is demed to ben souereyne suffisaunce. pilke self is souereyne power. souereyne reuerence. souereyne clernesne or noblesse and souereyne delit. what seist þou þan of alle pise þinges. þat is to seyne. suffisaunce power and pise oper þinges. ben þei þan as membris of blisfulnesse. or ben þei referred and brouzt to souereyne good. ¶ Ryzt as alle þinges þat ben brouzt to þe chief of hem.

2574 [*of*]—from *C*.
2575 *swyche*—*swych*
2576 *oper*—*oother*
2577 *seyne*—*seyn*
2578 *chief*—*chef*
2581 *goode 3is*—*good ys*
2582 *souereyne goode*—*souereyn good*

2583 *goode*—*good*
2585 *seif*—*selue*
2586 *pise*—*C*. omits
seyne—*seyn*
2589 *oper*—*oother*
2591 *brouzt*—MS. *wrouzt*, *C*.
browht

b. I vndirstonde wel quod .I. what þou purposest to seke. but I desir[e] to herkene þat þou shewe it me.
p. Take now þus þe discessioun of þis questioun quod she. yif al þise þinges quod she weren membris to felicity. þan weren þei diuerse þat oon fro þat oper.
¶ And swiche is þe nature of parties or of membris. þat dyuerse membris compounen a body. ¶ Certis quod I it haþ wel ben shewed her byforne. þat alle þise þinges ben alle on þing. þan ben þei none membris quod she. for ellys it sholde seme þat blisfulnesse were conioined *al of one membre alone. but þat is a þing þat may nat ben doon. þis þing quod .I. nys nat doutous. but I abide to herkene þe remenaunt of þe questioun. þis is open and clere quod she. þat alle oper þinges ben referred and brouzt to goode. ¶ For perfore is suffisaunce requered. For it is demed to ben good. and forþi is power requered. for men trowen also þat it be goode. and þis same þing mowe we pinken and coueiten of reuerence and of noblesse and of delit. þan is souereyne good þe soume and þe cause of alle þat auzt[e] be desired. forwhi pilke þing þat wiþ-holdeþ no good in it self ne semblaunce of goode it ne may nat wel in no manere be desired ne requered. and þe contrarie. For þouz þat þinges by hir nature ne ben nat goode algates yif men wene þat þei ben goode zit ben þei desired as þouz [þat] þei were verrayly goode. and perfore is it þat men auzten to wene by ryzt þat bounte be souereyne fyn and þe cause of alle þinges þat ben to requeren. ¶ But certis pilke þat is cause for whiche men requeren any þing. ¶ it semeþ þat pilke same þing be most desired. as þus yif þat a wyzt wolde ryde for cause of hele. he ne desireþ nat so mychel þe

B. I see what you are aiming at, and I am desirous to hear your arguments.

P. If all these things were members of felicity, they would differ one from another, for it is the property of diverse parts to compose one body. But it has been well shown that all these things are the same and do not differ—therefore they are not parts, for if they were, happiness [* fol. 22.]

ness might be made up of one member—which is absurd and impossible.

B. This I doubt not, but I desire to hear the sequel.

P. All the things above-mentioned must be tried by

2607

Good, as the rule and square.

Sufficiency, power, &c., are all desired, because they are esteemed a good. Good is the cause why all things are desired. For that which contains no good, either in reality or appearance, can never be desired. On the contrary, things not essentially good are desired because they appear to be real goods.

Hence, Good is esteemed as the cause and end of all things that we desire.

That which is the cause of our desiring any thing is itself what we chiefly want. If a man desire to ride on account of health—it is not the ride he wants so much as its salutary effects.

2593 desir[e] to herkene—desire for to herkne
2594 Take—tak
2596 fro—from
2597 swiche—swhyth
2600 on þing—othing
2602 one—on
2603 ben doon—be don

2604 herkene—herknen
2605 clere—cler
oper—oother
2606 goode—good
2609 goode—good
mowe—mowen
2617 [þat]—from C.
were verrayly — weeren

verraylyche
2618 perfore—therfor
auzten—owhten
2619 alle—alle the
2620 whiche—whyth
2623 mychel—mochel

Since all things
are sought after
for the sake of
Good, they cannot
be more desirable
than the good it-
self. It has been
shown that all the
aforesaid things
are only pursued
for the sake of

2629

happiness—hence
it is clear that
good and happi-
ness are essen-
tially the same.
B. I see no cause
to differ from you.
P. It has been
proved that God
and happiness are
identical and
inseparable.
B. That is true.
Therefore the sub-
stance of God is
also the same as
that of the
Supreme Good.

[The 10th Metur.]
Come hither, all
ye that are
captive—bound
and fettered
with the chains
of earthly
desires;—come
to this source of
goodness, where
you shall find rest
and security.
[Chaucer's gloss

2642

upon the Text.
Not the gold of
Tagus or of Her-
mus, nor the
gems of India,
can clear the
mental sight from
vain delusions,
but rather
darken it.
Such sources of
our delight are
found in the
earth's gloomy
caverns,—
but the bright
light that rules
the heavens
dispels the dark-
ness of the soul.
He who has seen
this light will
confess that the
beams of the sun
are weak and dim.

moeuyng to ryden as þe'effect of his heele. Now þan
syn þat alle þinges ben requered for þe grace of good.
þei ne ben [nat] desired of alle folk more þan þe same
good ¶ But we han graunted þat blysfulnesse is þat
þing for whiche þat alle þise oþer þinges ben desired.
þan is it þus þat certis only blisfulnesse is requered *and*
desired ¶ By whiche þing it shewep clerely þat good
and blisfulnesse is al oone *and* þe same substaunce.
¶ I se nat quod I wher fore þat men myzt[en] discorden
in þis. *p. and* we han shewed þat god *and* verrey blys-
fulnesse is al oon þing ¶ þat is soþe quod .I. þan
mowe we conclude sikerly þat þe substaunce of god is
set in þilke same good *and* in noon oþer place. 2636

NUNC OMNES PARITER ETC.

O Comeþ alle to-gidre now 3e þat ben ycauht *and*
ybounde wiþ wicked[e] cheines by þe deceiuable
delit of erþely þinges inhabytynge in 3oure pouzt. here
shal ben þe reste of 3oure laboures. here is þe hauene
stable in peisible quiete. þis al oone is þe open refut to
wrechis. *Glosa.* þis is to seyn. þat 3e þat ben com-
bred *and* deceyued wiþ worldly affeccions comeþ now
to þis souereyne good þat is god. þat is refut to hem þat
wolen come to hym. *Textus.* ¶ Alle þe þinges þat þe
ryuere Tagus 3iueþ 3ow wiþ his golden[e] grauels. or
ellys alle þe þynges þat þe ryuere hermus. 3iueþ wiþ his
rede brynke. or þat yndus 3iueþ þat is nexte þe hote
partie of þe worlde. þat medeleþ þe grene stones
(smaragde) wiþ þe white (margarits). ne sholde nat
cleren þe lokyng of 3oure þozt. but hiden rapen 3oure
blynde corages wiþ inne hire dirkenesse ¶ Alle þat
likeþ 3ow here *and* excitip *and* moeueþ 3oure pouztes.

2624 *moeuyng*—moeuyng
2626 [nat]—from O.
2628 *oþer*—oother
2630 *clerely*—clerly
good *and* blisfulnesse—of
good *and* of blysfulnesse
2631 *oone*—oon
2633 *myzt[en]*—myhten
2634 *oon*—oo

2634 *soþe*—soth
2635 *moue*—mowen
2636 *set*—MS. sette, C. set
2638 *wicked[e]*—wyckye
2639, 2640 *here*—her
2640 *hauene*—MS. heuene,
C. hauene
2641 *al oone*—allone
2643 *worldly*—worldely

2645 *come*—comyn
2646 *golden[e]* *grauels* —
goldene grauyles
2647 *þynges*—MS. rynges, C.
things
hermus—MS. herinus, C.
herynus
2648 *nexte*—next
2649 *worlde*—world

þe erþe haþ noryshed it in hys lowe caues. but þe shynnyng by þe whiche þe heuene is gouerned and whennes þat it haþ hys strengþe þat chaseþ þe derke ouerprowyng of þe soule. ¶ And who so euer may knowen þilke lyzt of blisfulnesse. he shal wel seine þat þe white bemes of þe sonne ne ben nat cleer. 2659

ASSENCIOR INQUAM CUNCTA. Boice.

I assent[e] me quod .I. For alle þise þinges ben strongly bounden wip ryzt ferme resouns. how mychel wilt þou preisen it quod she. yif þat þou knowe what þilke goode is. I wol preise it quod I by price wip outhen ende. ¶ yif it shal bytyde me to knowe also to-gidre god þat is good. ¶ certys quod she þat shal I do þe by verray resoun. yif þat þo þinges þat I haue conclude[d] a litel her by *forne dwellen oonly in hir first[e] grauntyng. Boice. þei dwellen graunted to þe quod .I. þis is to seyne as who seiþ .I. graunt þi forseide conclusiouns. ¶ Haue I nat shewed þe quod she þat þe þinges þat ben requered of many folke. ne ben nat verray goodes ne perfit. for þei ben diuerse þat oon fro þat oper. and so as eche of hem is lakkyng to oper. þei ne han no power to bryngen a good þat is ful and absolute. ¶ But þan atte arst ben þei verray good whan þei ben gadred to-gidre al in to a forme and in to oon wirchyng. so þat þilke þing þat is suffisaunce. þilk same be power and reuerence. and noblesse and mirþe. ¶ And forsoþe but alle þise þinges ben alle o same þing þei ne han nat wher by þat þei mowen ben put in þe noubre of þinges. þat auȝten ben requered or desired. b. ¶ It is shewed quod .I. ne her of may þer no man douten. p. þe þinges þan quod she þat ne

B. I assent, and am convinced by the force of your arguments.
P. But how greatly would you value it, did you fully know what this good is?
B. I should value it infinitely if at the same time I might attain to the knowledge of God, who is the sovereign good.
(The 11 prose.)
P. I shall elucidate this matter by incontrovertible reasons if thou wilt grant me those things which I have before laid down as conclusions.
B. I grant them all.
P. Have I not shown that the things which the majority of mankind so eagerly

[* fol. 22 b.]

pursue are not

2668

true and perfect goods, for they differ from one another; and because where one of them is absent the others cannot confer absolute happiness (or good)? Have I not shown, too, that the true and chief good is made up of an assemblage of all the goods in such a way, that if sufficiency is an attribute of this good, it must at the same time possess

2678

power, reverence, &c. If they be not one and the same, why should they be classed among desirable things? While these things differ from one another they are not goods;

2678

power, reverence, &c. If they be not one and the same, why should they be classed among desirable things? While these things differ from one another they are not goods;

2654, 2656 *hap*—MS. *habe*
2654 *hys*—*hyse*
2656 *chaseþ þe derke*—*eschuoth the dyrke*
2657 *euer*—C. omits
2658 *seine*—*seyn*
2660 *assent[e]*—*assente*
2662 *mychel*—*mochel*

2663 *goode*—good
2664 *price*—*prys*
2666 *is*—omitted
seyne—*seyn*
2671 *folke*—*folkes*
2673 *oper*—*oothre*
ech—*ech*
2675 *absolute*—*absolut*

2675 *atte arst*—at erst
2676 *al*—alle
a—O
2677 *to*—omitted
wirchyng—*wyrkyng*
2678 *þilk*—*þilke*
2681 *put*—MS. *putte*, C. put
auȝten—*owhten*

but as soon as they become one then they are made goods.— Do not they owe their being good to their unity? B. So it appears. P. Do you confess that everything that is good becomes such by the participation of the sovereign good or no? B. It is so. P. Then you must own that unity and good are the same (for the substance of these things must be the same, whose effects do not naturally differ). B. I cannot gainsay it. P. Do you not perceive that everything which exists is permanent so long as it preserves its unity—but as soon as it loses this, it is dissolved and annihilated?

2700

B. How so? P. In the animal creation as long as the soul and the body are united and conjoined in one, this being is called an animal or beast, but when the union is dissolved by the separation of these, the animal perishes and is no longer a beast. The same may be said of man and all other things; they subsist while unity is preserved, but as soon as that is destroyed the things themselves lose their existence. B. I believe we should find this true in every case. P. Is there anything which acts naturally that foregoes this desire of existence and wishes for death and corruption?

ben none goodes whan þei ben diuerse. *and* whan þei bygynnen to ben al o ping. þan ben þei goodes. ne comþ it hem nat þan by þe getyng of unite þat þei ben makid goodes. *b.* so it semeþ quod .I. but alle ping þat is good quod she grauntest þou þat it be good by participacioun of good or no. ¶ I graunt[e] it quod .I. ¶ þan mayst þou graunt[en] it quod she by semleable resoun þat oon *and* good ben o same ping. ¶ For of pinges [of] whiche þat þe effect nis nat naturely diuerse nedys þe substaunce mot ben o same pinga. I ne may nat denye it quod I. ¶ Hast þou nat knowen wel quod she. þat al ping þat is hap so longe his dwellyng *and* his substaunce. as longe is it oone. ¶ but whan it forletip to ben oone it mot nedis dien *and* corruppe to-gidre. ¶ In whiche manere quod .I. ¶ Ryzt as in beestes quod she. whan þe soule *and* þe body ben conioigned in oon *and* dwellen to-gidre it is cleped a beest. *and* whan hire vnite is destroyed by disseueraunce þat oon fram þat opir. þan shewep it wel þat it is a dede ping. *and* þat it is no lenger no beste. *and* þe body of a wyzt while it dwelleþ in oon forme by coniunccioun of membris it is wel seyn þat it is a figure of mankynde. *and* yif þe parties of þe body ben [so] diuide[d] *and* disseuered þat oon fro þat opir þat þei destroien vnite. þe body forletip to ben þat it was by-forne. ¶ And who so wolde renne in þe same manere by alle pinges he sholde seen þat wiþ outen doute euery ping is in his substaunce as longe as it is oon. *and* whan it forletip to ben oon it dieþ *and* perissip. *boice.* whan I considre quod I many pinges I see noon oþer. ¶ Is þer any ping þanne quod she þat in as moche as it lyueþ naturely. þat forletip þe appetit or talent of

2684 none—no
2685 al o—alle oon
2686 comþ—comth
2689 graunt[e]—graunte
2690 mayst þou graunt[en]
mosthow graunten
2692 [o]—from O.

2695 al—alle
hap—MS. hape
2696, 2697 oone—oon
2698 whiche—which
2708 dede—ded
lenger—lengere
beste—beest

2704 while—whil
oon—oo
2706 [so] diuide[d]—so de-
uydyd
2709 so—omitted
2713 many—manye

hys beynge. *and* desirē to come to deēp *and* to corrupcioun. ¶ yif I considere *quod* I þe beestes þat han any manere nature of willynge or of nillynge I ne fynde no þing. but yif it be constreyned fro wiþ out forþe. þat forletip or dispiseþ to lyue *and* to duren or þat wole his þankes hasten hym to dien. ¶ For euery beest trauayleþ hym to defende *and* kepe þe sauacioun of lijf. *and* escheweþ deēp *and* destruccioun. b. but certys I doute me of herbes *and* of trees. þat is to seyn þat I am in a doute of swiche þinges as herbes or trees þat ne han no felyng soule. ne no natural wirchynges seruyng to appetite as beestes han wheþer þei han appetite to dwellen *and* to duren. ¶ Certis *quod* she ne þer of þar þe nat doute. ¶ Now look vpon þise herbes *and* þise trees. þei waxen firste in swiche place as ben couenable to hem. in whiche place þei ne mowen nat sone dien ne dryen as longe as hire nature may defenden hem. ¶ For some of hem waxen in feldes *and* some in mountaignes. *and* opir waxen in mareis. [*A leaf lost here, and supplied from C.*] 2735 [*and* oothre cleuyn on Roches / *and* soume waxen plentyuous in sondes / *and* yif þat any wyht enforce hym to beryn hem in to oother places / they wexen drye // For nature yeueth to euery thing þat / þat is conuenient to hym *and* trauaylith þat they ne dye nat as longe as they han power to dwellyn *and* to lyuen // what woltow seyn of this / þat they drawen alle hyr norysshynge by hyr rootes / ryht as they haddyn hyr Mowthes I. plounged with in the erthes / *and* shedyn by hyr maryes (i. medullas) hyr wode *and* hyr bark / *and* what woltow seyn of this þat thilke thing / þat is ryht softe as the marye (i. sapp) is / þat is alwey hidd in the feete al with inne *and* þat it is defendid fro with owte by the stidefastnesse of wode // *and* þat the vttereste bark is put ayenis the des-

B. I do not find any creature endowed with volition, which, of itself and without constraint, renounces or despises life and self-preservation or willingly hastens to destruction. But with regard to herbes and trees, I am doubtful whether

ther I ought to have the same opinion of them, for they have no sensitive soul, nor any natural volition like animals. P. There is no cause for doubt in respect to these. Herbes and trees first choose a convenient place to grow in, where, agreeably to their respective nature, they are sure to thrive, and are in no danger of perishing; for some grow on plains, some on mountains, &c.; and if you try to transplant them, they forthwith wither and die. To everything that vegetates, nature gives what is needful for its subsistence, and takes care that they should not perish before their time. Need I tell you that plants are nourished by their roots (which are so many mouths hid in the earth), and diffuse strength throughout the whole plant, as through their marrow? And further, it is admirably contrived that the pith, the most tender part of plants, is hid in the middle of the trunk, surrounded with hard and solid wood, and with an outer coat of bark to ward off the storms and weather.

2718 *willynge*—wyllynge
or—*and*
2719 *þing*—beest
out forþe—owte forth

2720 *lyue*—lyuen
2723 *of lijf*—of hys lyf
2726 *soule*—soules
2727 *appetite*—appetites

2729 *look*—loke
2730 *scacen firste*—wexen
2733, 2734 *some*—som. [lyst
2734 *opir*—oothre

Admire, too,
the diligence

2751 of nature in propagating plants by a multiplicity of seeds, which are as a foundation for a building, not to remain for a time, but as it were for ever. Things inanimate incline to what is most suitable to their beings, and to preserve continuance. For why should the flame mount upwards by lightness, and the earth tend towards its centre by gravity

2761 (weight), unless these motions were agreeable to their respective natures? Whatever is agreeable to the nature of a thing preserves it. So what is contrary to its nature destroys it. Dense bodies, such as stones, resist an easy separation of parts; whereas the particles of liquid or flowing things, such as air and water, are easily separated and soon reunited.

2771 Fire avoids and utterly refuses any such division. I am not now treating of the voluntary motion of a conscious soul, but of the natural intention and instinct. We swallow our meat without thinking of it, and we draw our breath in sleep without perception. The love of life in animals is not derived from an intellectual will, but from natural principles

2781 implanted in them. For the will, induced by powerful reasons,

temprance of the heuene / as a defendowr myhty to suf-
fren harm / *and* thus certes maystow wel sen / how gret is
the diligence of nature / For alle thinges renouelen *and*
pupplisen hem *with* seed. I. multipliyed / nether nis no man
pat ne wot wel *pat* they ne ben ryht as a foundement *and*
edyfice for to duren / nat only for a tyme / but ryht as for to
duren perdurablely by generacyoun // *and* the thinges ek
pat men wenen ne hauen none sowles / ne desire they nat ech
of hem by sem[b]lable resoun to kepyn *pat* that is hirs / *pat*
is to seyn *pat* is acordynge to hyr nature in conseruacioun
of hyr beyng *and* enduryng // For wher for elles berith
lythnesse the flaumes vp / *and* the weyhte presseth the
erthe a-doun // but For as moche as thilke places and
thilke moeuynge ben couenable to euerich of hem //
and forsothe euery thing kepith thilke *pat* is acordynge
and propre to hym // ryht as thinges *pat* ben contraries
and enemys corompen hem // *and* yit the harde thinges
as stoones clyuen *and* holden hyr partyes to gydere
ryht faste *and* harde / *and* deffenden hem in withstond-
enge *pat* they ne departe nat lyhtly a twyne // *and* the
thinges *pat* ben softe *and* fletynge as is water *and* Eyr
they departyn lyhtly // *and* yeuen place to hem *pat*
brekyn or deuyden hem // but natheles they retornen
sone ayein in to the same thinges fro whennes they ben
arraced // but fyr [fleeth] *and* refuseth alle deuysoun /
ne I. ne trete nat heere now of weleful moeuynge of the
sowle *pat* is knowynge // but of the naturel entencious
of thinges // As thus ryht as we swolwe the mete *pat* we
resseyuen *and* ne thinke nat on it / *and* as we drawen
owre breth in slepyng *pat* we wite it nat whil we slepyt //
For certes in the beestys the loue of hyr lyuynge ne of
hyr beeinges ne comth nat of the wilnynges of the sowle //
but of the bygynnyngis of nature // For certes thorw
constreynynge causes / wil desireth *and* embraceth ful

2753 *pupplisen*—H. publis-
shen)
2755 *edyfice*—MS. edyfte

2755 *a tyme*—H. con) tyme
2758 *that*—H. omits
hirs—H. his

2774 [fleeth]—from H.
2775 *weleful*—H. wilfulle
2779 *slepyt*—H. slepen

ofte tyme / the deth þat nature dredith // that is to seyn
as thus that a man may ben constreynyd so by som
cause that his wil desireth and taketh the deth which
þat nature hateth *and* dredeth ful sore // And som tyme
we seeth the contrarie / as thus that the wil of a wight /
destorbeth *and* constreyneth þat þat nature desireth / and
requereth al-wey // that is to sein the werk of generacioun /
by the whiche generacioun only / dwelleth *and* is sus-
tenyd the longe durablete of mortal thinges // And thus
this charite and this Loue þat euery thing hath to hym
self ne comth nat of the moeuyng of the sowle / but of
the entencioun of nature // For the puruyance of god
hat yeuen to thinges þat ben creat of hym / this þat is
a ful gret cause / to lyuen *and* to duren / for which they
desiren naturally hyr lyf as longe as euer they mowen //
For w[h]ych thou maist nat drede by no manere / that
alle the thinges / that ben anywhere / that they ne re-
queren naturally / the ferme stableness of perdurable
dwellynge / and ek the eschuyng of destruccyon // B //
now confesse I. wel *quod* I. that I. see wel now certeynly /
with owte dowtes / the thinges that whylom semeden
vncerteyn to me / P. // but *quod* she thilke thyng þat
desireth to be *and* to dwellyn perdurablely / he desireth
to ben oon // For yif þat that oon weere destroyed // certes
beinge ne shulde ther non dwellyn to no wiht // that
is soth *quod* I. // Thanne *quod* she desirin alle thinges
oon // .I. assente *quod* .I. // *and* I haue shewyd *quod* she
that thilke same oon is thilke that is good // B // ye for-
sothe *quod* I. // Alle thinges thanne *quod* she requyren
good // And thilke good thanne [pow] maist descryuen
ryht thus // Good is thilke thing þat euery wyht de-
sireth // Ther ne may be thowht *quod* .I. no moore
verray thing / for either alle thinges ben referred *and*
browht to nowht / *and* floteryn with owte gouernour

sometimes
chooses and em-
braces death, al-
though nature
dreads and abhors
it. And, on the
contrary, we see
that concupi-
sence (by which
alone the human
race is perpetu-
ated) is often re-
strained by the
will. Self-love
possessed by every
creature is not the
2791

product of vol-
ition, but proceeds
from a natural im-
pression or inten-
tion of nature.
Providence has
implanted in all
created things an
instinct, for the
purpose of self-
preservation, by
which they desire
to prolong exist-
ence to its utmost
limits. Doubt not,
therefore, that
everything which
2799

exists desires ex-
istence and avoids
dissolution.

B. You have made
those things per-
fectly plain and in-
telligible, which be-
fore were obscure
and doubtful.

P. That which de-
sires to subsist
desires also to
retain its unity
for if this be taken
away it cannot
continue to exist.
2807

B. That is very
true!

P. All things then
desire one thing—
unity.

B. They do.

P. Unity then is
the same as good.

B. Yes.

P. Thus all
things desire good

—and it is one
2813

and the same good
that all creatures
desire.

B. Nothing is
more true. For
either all things
must be reduced
to nothing (or
have no relation

2798 *seeth*—H. seen)
 will—H. wille
2799 *And*—H. as

2796 *hat*—H. haue
2800 *the*—H. þo
2806 *perdurably*—H. per-

 durably
2807 *destroyed*—H. destrued
2811 *thilke* (1)—H. like

to anything else),
and, destitute of a
head, float about
without control or
order; or if there
be anything to
which all things
tend, that must be
the supreme good.
P. I rejoice great-
ly, my dear pupil,
that you so clearly
apprehend this
truth, of which
but just now you
were ignorant.

2825

B. What was that?

P. The End of all
things. And this
is what every one
desires; but we
have shown that
good is the thing
desired by all,
therefore Good is
the End of all
things.

2832

despoiled of oon / as of hir propre heued / or elles yif
ther be any thinge / to which þat alle thinges tenden
and hyen / that thing moste ben the souereyn good of
alle goodes / P /. thanne seyde she thus // O my norry
quod she I haue gret gladnesse of the // For thow
hast fischched in thin herte the myddel sothtfastnesse //
that is to seyn the prykke // but this thing hath ben
descouered to the / in that thow seydyest þat thow
wystest nat a lytel her by-for / what was that quod
I. // That thow ne wystest nat quod she whych was
the ende of thinges // and Certes that is the thing þat
euery wiht desireth // and for as mochel as we han
gaderid / and comprehendyd that good is thilke thing
that is desired of alle / thanne moten we nedes con-
fessun / that good is the fyn of alle thinges.

QUISQUIS PROFUNDA MENTE.

[The 11. Metrum.]

He who seeks
truth with deep
research and is
unwilling to go
wrong, should
collect his slum-
bering thoughts,
and turn the inner
light upon the
soul itself.

The knowledge
that he seeks
without he will
find treasured up
in the recesses of
the mind.

2841

The light of Truth
will disperse
Error's dark
clouds, and shine
forth brighter
than the sun.
[Chaucer's glossa.]

2847

Who so that sekith soth by a deep thoght And
coueyteth nat to ben deseuyd by no mys-weyes //
lat hym rollen and trenden with Inne hym self / the Lyht
of his inward syhte // And lat hym gadere ayein en-
clynynge in to a compas the longe moeuynges of hys
thowhtes / And lat hym techen his corage that he hath
enclosed and hyd / in his tresors / al þat he compaseth or
sekith fro with owte // And thanne thilke thing that the
blake cloude of errour whilom hadde y-couered / shal
lyhten more clerly thanne phebus hym self ne shyneth //
Glosa // who so wole seken the dep[e] grounde / of soth
in his thowht / and wol nat be deceuyd by false pro-
posicionus / that goon amys fro the trouthe // lat hym wel
examine / and rolle with inne hym self the nature and
the propretes of the thing // and lat hym yit eft sonas
examine and rollen his thowhtes by good deliberacioun

2818 heued or elles—H. hede
or els
2820 hyen—H. hyen) to
moste—H. must

2838 his—H. þis
that—H. and þat
2841 blake—H. blak
hadde y-couered—H. had

couered
2848 lyhten—H. light
2849 dep[e]—C. dep. H. depe
2847 thing—H. þynges

or that he deme // and lat hym techen his sowle that it 2849
 hat by naturel pryncyplis kyndeliche y-hyd with in
 it self alle the trowthe the whiche he ymagynith to ben [Chancer's gloss]
 in thinges with owte // And thanne alle the dyrknesse of
 his mysknowynge shal seen more euydently to [be]
 syhte of his vndyrstondynge thanne the sonne ne semyth 2854
 to [be] syhte with owte forth / For certes the body
 bryngynge the weyhte of foryetynge / ne hath nat chasyd
 owt of yowre thowhte al the clernesse of yowre knowyng //
 For certeynly the seed of sooth haldith *and* clyueth
 with in yowre corage / *and* it is a-waked *and* excited by
 the wynde *and* by the blastes of doctryne // For where
 for elles demen ye of yowre owne wyl the ryhtes whan 2861
 ye ben axed // but yif so were þat the noryssynges of
 resoun ne lyuede .I.-plowngyd in the depthe of yowre
 herte // this [is] to seyn how sholden men demen þe
 sooth of any thing þat weere axed / yif ther neere a
 Roote of sothfastnesse þat weere yplowngyd *and* hyd in 2866
 the nature[l] pryncyplis / the whiche sothfastnesse
 lyued with in the depnesse of the thowght // *and* yif
 so be þat the Muse *and* the doctryne of plato syngyth
 sooth // al þat euery whyht lerneth / he ne doth no
 thing elles thanne but recordeth as men recordyn thinges
 þat ben foryetyng. 2872

For when the body enclosed the soul and cast oblivion o'er its powers it did wholly exterminate the heaven-born light. The germs of truth were latent within, and were fanned into action by the gentle breath of learning.

Were not truth implanted in the heart, how could man distinguish right from wrong?

So, if what Plato taught is true, 'to learn is no other than to remember what had been before forgotten.'

TUM EGO PLATONI INQUAM.

THanne seide I thus // I acorde me gretly to plato / for
 I thow remenbrist *and* recordist me thise thinges yit]
 * þe seconde tyme. þat is to seyn. first whan I lost[e] my
 memorie by þe contagious coniunccioun of þe body wip
 þe soule. *and* eftsones afterward whan I lost[e] it con-
 founded by þe charge *and* by þe burden of my sorwe.
 ¶ And þan sayde she þus. ¶ If þou look[e] quod she
 firste þe þinges þat þou hast graunted it ne shal nat

[The .12. prose.]
 B. I am quite of Plato's opinion, for you have now a second time recalled these things
 * [A ddt. MS. 10.340, fol. 23.]
 to my remembrance which had been forgotten, first by the contagious union of soul and body, and afterwards by the pressure of my afflictions.
 P. If you will reflect upon the con-

2863 *depthe*—H. depe
 2864 [*is*]—from H.
 sholden—H. shulde

2867 *nature*[l]—H. naturelle
 2875, 2877 *lost*[e]—losto
 2878 *burden*—burdene

2879 *look*[e]—looke
 2880 *firste*—fyrst

cessions you have already made, you will soon call to mind that truth, of which you lately confessed your ignorance.

B. What is that?

P. It was, by what power the world is governed.

B. With regard to that, I own I confessed my ignorance, but though I now remotely see what you infer, yet I wish for further explanation from you.

P. You acknowledged a little while ago that this world was governed by God?

B. I still cling to this opinion, and will give you my reasons for this belief. The discordant elements of this world

2895

would never have assumed their present form unless there had been a wise intelligence to unite them; and even after such a union, the joining of such opposites would have disunited and ruined the fabric made up of them, had not the same conjoining hand kept them together. The order that reigns throughout nature could not proceed so regularly and uniformly if there were not a Being, unchangeable and steadfast, to order and dispose so great a diversity of changes. This Being, the creator and ruler of all things, I call God. *P.* As thy sentiments on these

ben ryzt feer þat þou ne shalt remembren þilke þing þat þou seidest þat þou nistest nat. what þing quod I. ¶ by whiche gouernment quod she þat þis worlde is gouerned. Me remembriþ it wel quod I. and I confesse wel þat I ne wist[e] it nat ¶ But al be it so þat I se now from afer what þou purposest ¶ Algetes I desire ȝit to herkene it of þe more pleynelly. ¶ þou ne wendest nat quod she a litel here byforne þat men sholden doute þat þis worlde is gouerned by god. ¶ Certys quod I ne ȝitte doute I it nauȝt. ne I nil neuer wene þat it were to doute. as who seip. but I wot wel þat god gouerneþ þis worlde. ¶ And I shal shortly answer þe by what resouns I am brouȝt to þis. ¶ þis worlde quod I of so many dyuerse and contrarious parties ne myȝten neuer han ben assembled in o forme.

but yif þere ne were oon þat conioigned so many[e] diuerse] þinges. ¶ And þe same diuersite of hire natures þat so discordeden þat oon fro þat oþer most[e] departen and vnoignen þe þinges þat ben conioigned. yif þere ne were oon þat contened[e] þat he haþ conioigned and ybounde. ne þe certain ordre of nature ne sholde. nat brynge furþe so ordinee moeuynge. by places. by tymes. by doynge. by spaces. by qualite. yif þere ne were oon þat were ay stedfast dwellynge. þat ordeyned[e] and disposed[e] þise diuersites of moeuynge. ¶ and þilke þinge what so euer it be. by whiche þat alle þinges ben makend and ylad. I clepe hym god þat is a worde þat is vsed to alle folke. þan seide she. syn þou felest þus þise þinges quod she. I trowe þat I haue lytel more to done. þat þou myȝty of

2893 *whiche*—which
gouernment—gouernement
worlde—wordyl
2895 *wist[e]*—wiste
2897 *pleynely*—pleynly
2898 *here byforne*—her by-
forne
2899 *worlde is*—world nis
2900 *ȝittis doute* — yit ne
dowte
nil—nel
2902 *wot*—MS. wote, C. wot

2892, 2894 *worlde*—world
2893 *answere*—answeren
2894 *many*—manye
2895 *myȝten*—myhte
2896 *þere*—ther
2897 *many[e]*—manye
2897 *[diuerse]*—from C.
hire—hir
2898 *most[e]*—moste
2900 *þere*—ther
2900 *contened[e]*—contenede
haþ—MS. haþe

2902 *furþe*—forth
ordinee moeuynge—ordene
moeuynge
2904 *þere*—ther
stedfast—stidefast
2906 *ordeyned[e]*—ordeynede
disposed[e]—disponede
2907 *whiche*—which
ben—be
ylad—MS. yladde, C. I-ladd
2908 *worde*—word
folke—foolk

wilfulnesse hool *and* sounde ne se eftsones þi contre.

¶ But lat vs loken þe þinges þat we han purposed herbyform. ¶ Haue I nat noumbred *and* seid quod she

þat suffisaunce is in blisfulnesse. *and* we han accorded þat god is *and* þilke same blisfulnesse. ¶ yis forsoþe quod

I. *and* þat to gouerne þis worlde quod she. ne shal he neuer han nede of none helpe fro wipoute. for ellys yif

he had[de] nede of any helpe. he ne sholde not haue [no] ful suffisaunce. ȝis þus it mot nedes be quod I.

¶ þan ordeyneþ he by hym self al oon alle þinges quod she. þat may nat ben denied quod I. ¶ And I haue

shewed þat god is þe same good. ¶ It remembreþ me wel quod I. ¶ þan ordeineþ he alle þinges by þilke

goode quod she. Syn he whiche we han accorded to ben good gouerneþ alle þingus by hym self. *and* he is a

keye *and* a stiere by whiche þat þe edifice of þis worlde is ykept stable *and* wip oute corumpynges ¶ I accorde

me gretly quod I. *and* I aperceiuede a litel here byform þat þou woldest seyne þus. Al be it so þat it were by

a pinne suspeciouus. I trowe it wel quod she. ¶ For as I trowe þou leedest nowe more ententifly þine eyen to

loken þe verray goodes ¶ but napeles þe þinges þat I shal telle þe ȝit ne sheweþ nat lasse to loken. what is

þat quod I. ¶ So as men trowen quod she *and* þat ryztfully þat god gouerneþ alle þinges by þe keye of his

goodnesse. ¶ And alle þise same þinges as I [haue] tauȝt þe. hasten hem by naturel entenciouus to comen

to goode þer may no man douten. þat þei ne ben gouerned uoluntariely. *and* þat þei ne conuerten [hem]

nat of her owen wille to þe wille of hire ordenour. as þei þat ben accordyng *and* enclinyng to her gouernour

points are so just I have but little more to do—for thou mayest be happy and secure, and revisit thy own country. But let us reflect a little more upon these matters. Did we not agree that *Sufficiency* is of the nature of true happiness? And have we not seen that God is that true felicity, and that He needs no external aid nor instruments? For if he should, he would not be self-sufficient. And he directs all things by himself alone?

B. It cannot be gainsaid.

P. I have shown that God is the chief good; God must therefore direct and order all things by good, since he governs them by himself, whom we have proved to be the supreme good.

2928

and he is that helm and rudder, by which this machine of the world is steadily and securely conducted.

B. I entirely agree to this, and partly anticipated your remarks. P. I believe it; for your eyes are now more intent upon these great truths relating to true felicity; but what I am going to say is not less open to your view.

B. What is that?

P. As we believe that God governs all things by his goodness, and that all things have a natural tendency toward the good, can it be doubted but that they all voluntarily sub-

2911 *wilfulnesse*—walefulnesse

2912 *han*—ha

2913 *seid*—MS. seide, C. seyð

2916 *worldis*—world

2917 *none helpe*—non help

2918 *hadi[de]*—hadde

helpe—help

2919 [no]—from C.

2920 *al oon*—allone

2921 *ben denied*—be denyed

2924, 2926 *whiche*—which

2925 *ben*—be

2926 *worldis*—world

2928 *gretly*—gretely

here—her

2929 *seyne*—seye

2931 *nowe*—now

2932 *napeles*—nat[h]iles

2935 *ryztfully*—MS. on ryzt-

fully

2936 [haue]—from C.

2938 *goode*—good

2939 [hem]—from C.

2940 *nat*—omitted

her—hir

owen—owne

wille (both)—wil

hire—hyr

2941 *her*—hyr

[* Fol. 23 b.]
mit to the will
and control
of their ruler?
B. It cannot be
otherwise. There
would be no safety
for those who
obey, if the discord
of a portion were
allowed. P. Is
there anything
that follows the

2948
dictates of nature
that seeks to
counteract the will
of God? B. No.
P. If there should
be any such, it
could not pre-
vail against
him, who is su-
premely happy
and consequently
omnipotent.
Then there is
nothing that
either will or can
withstand this
supreme good?
B. Nothing,
certainly.
P. It is then the
supreme good that

2958
governs and
orders all things
powerfully and
benignly.
B. I am delighted
with your conclu-
sions, but much
more with your
language; so that
fools may be
ashamed of their
objections to the
divine govern-
ment.
[Chaucer's gloss.]
P. You have read
the Poets' fables,

2966
how the Giants
stormed heaven—
how they were re-
pulsed and
punished accord-
ing to their
deserts; but may
we not compare
our reasons to-
gether, for by so
doing some clear
spark of truth may
shine forth?

2943 *realme*—Reame
seme—semen
2945 *bere*—ther
2947 *gone aseyne*—goonayein
2949 *enforced[e]*—enforcede
myzt[e]—myhte
auyle—auaylen
2950 *aseyne*—a.yenis
2951 *outerly*—owtrely
myzt[e]—myhte
auaylen—MS. *aualeyne*,

C. *auaylen*
hym—hem
bere—ther
2952 *wol*—wole
wipstonde—with-stondyn
his souereyne—his soue-
2955 *softly*—softtely [reyn
2957 *somme*—somme
[the]—from C.
2959 *last[e]*—laste
2960 *greet[e]*—grete

2960, 2963 *auyten*—owhten
2961 *seyne*—seyn
2965 *of hem*—of it
herd—MS. *herde*, C. *herd*
2967 *disposed[e]*—desposede
2968 *seyne distroied[e]*—sain
destroyede
2971 *swiche*—swych
some—som
2973 *sope*—soth
list—liste

and her kyng. ¶ It mot nedys be so quod. I. ¶ ¶ For
þe realme ne sholde not seme blisful ȝif þere were a ȝok
of mysdrawynges in diuerse parties ne þe sauynge of
obedient þinges ne sholde nat be. þan is þere no þing
quod she þat kepith hys nature! þat enforceþ hym to
gone aseyne god. ¶ No quod. I. ¶ And if þat any þing
enforced[e] hym to wipstonde god. myzt[e] it auayle at
þe laste aseyne hym þat we han graunted to ben al
myzty by þe ryzt of blisfulnesse. ¶ Certis quod I al
outerly it ne myzt[e] nat auaylen hym. þan is þere no
þing quod she þat eyþer wol or may wipstonde to þis
souereyne good. ¶ I trowe nat quod. I. ¶ þan is
þilke þe souereyne good quod she þat alle þingus
gouerneþ strongly and ordeyneþ hem softly. þan seide I
þus. I delite me quod I nat oonly in þe endes or in þe
somes of [the] resouns þat þou hast concludid and
proued. ¶ But þilke wordes þat þou vvest deliten me
moche more. ¶ So at þe last[e] foolles þat somtyme
renden greet[e] þinges auȝten ben asshamed of hem
self. ¶ þat is to seyne þat we foolles þat reprehenden
wickedly þe þingus þat touchen goddes gouernaunce we
auȝten ben asshamed of oure self. As I þat seide god
refuseþ oonly þe werkes of men. and ne entremetiþ nat
of hem. p. þou hast wel herd quod she þe fables of þe
poetes. how þe geauntes assailden þe heuene wip þe
goddes. but for soþe þe debonaire force of god disposed[e]
hem so as it was worþi. þat is to seyne distroied[e] þe
geauntes. as it was worþi. ¶ But wilt þou þat we
ioygnen togedre þilke same resouns. for perauenture of
swiche coniunccioun may sterten vp some faire sperkele
of soþe ¶ Do quod I as þe list. wenest þou quod she

pat god ne is almyzty. no man is in doute of it. Certys quod I no wyzt ne defendip it if he be in hys mynde. but he quod she pat is al myzty pere nis no ping pat he ne may do. pat is sope quod I. May god done yuel quod she. ¶ Syn pat he ne may not done yuel pat may done alle pinges. scornest pou me quod. I. or ellys playest pou or deceiuest pou me. pat hast so wouen me wiþ þi resouns. þe house of didalus so entrelaced. pat it is vnable to ben vnlaced. pou pat oper while entrest þere pou issest *and* oper while issest þere pou entrest. ne fooldest pou nat to gidre by replicacioun of wordes a maner wondirful cercle or enviroynynge of symplite deuyne. ¶ For certys a litel her byforne whan pou bygunne atte blisfulnesse pou seidest pat it is souereyne good. *and* seidest pat it is set in souereyne god. *and* pat god is þe ful[le] blisfulnesse. for whiche pou 3af[e] me as a couenable 3ifte. pat is to seyne pat no wyzt nis blisful. but yif he be good al so þer wiþ *and* seidest eke pat þe forme of goode is þe substaunce of god. *and* of blisfulnesse. *and* seidest pat pilke same oone is pilke same goode pat is required *and* desired of al þe kynde of pinges. *and* pou proeuedest in disputyng pat god gouerneþ alle [the] pinges of þe worlde by þe gouernementys of bountee. *and* seydest pat alle pinges wolen ybeyen to hym. *and* seidest pat þe nature of yuel nis no ping. *and* pise pinges ne shewedest pou nat wiþ no resouns ytake fro wiþoute but by proues in cercles *and* homelyche knowen. ¶ þe whiche proues drawn to hem self hir feiþ *and* hir accorde eueriche [of] hem of oper. þan seide she þus. I ne scorne þe nat ne playe ne desseyue

B. As you please.
P. Is God omnipotent?

B. No one doubts it.

P. If he is almighty, there are, then, no limits to his power?

B. He can doubtless do all things.

P. May God do evil? B. No.

P. Is evil nothing, since God, who is almighty, cannot do it?

B. Dost thou mock me or play with me, leading me with thy arguments into an inextricable labyrinth, and enclosing me in a wonderful circle of Divine Simplicity? For thou didst first begin with happiness, and didst say that it was the sovereign good, and that it resided in God; then, that God was that Good and the

2989 perfection of happiness; and, hence, thou didst infer that nobody could be happy unless he became likewise a God. Again, thou saidst that the very form of good was the substance whereof God and happiness were composed, and that it was the object and desire of all things in nature. Thou didst prove that God rules the world by his goodness, and that all things willingly obeyed him; and that evil has no existence. These truths you established by forcible and natural arguments, and by no strained and far-fetched reasons.

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2973 is (1)—be
man—omitted
is (2)—nis
2974 defendip—dowteth
2975 here—ther
2976 do—C. omits
sope—soth
done—don
2978, 2979 done—don
2980 women—MS. wonnen, C.

wouen
2981 houses—hows
2983 here (both)—ther
2987 atte—at
2988 set—MS. sette, C. set
1989 ful[le]—fulle
whiche—which
3af[e]—yaue
2990 3ifte—yift
seyne—seyen

2992, 2994 goode—good
2993 oone—oon
2994 al—alle
2998 [the]—from C.
2998 ybeyen—obeyen
2999 no (2)—none
3000 ytake—I-taken
3001 homelyche—hoomlich
3003 eueriche—uerich
[of]—from C.

P. I have not deduced you, for by the Divine aid we have accomplished our chief task. I have proved to you that it is an essential property of the Divine nature not to go out of itself, nor to receive into itself anything extraneous. Parmenides says of the Deity that *God is like a well-rounded sphere.*

3012

[* fol. 24.]
He causes the moving globe to revolve, but is himself immovable. If I have chosen my arguments from the subjects within range of our discussion, do not let that surprise you, for, as Plato has taught us, there ought to be an alliance between the words and the subject of discourse.

þe. but I haue shewed to þe þinge þat is grettest ouer alle þinges by þe gifte of god þat we some tyme prayden ¶ For þis is þe forme of [the] deuyne substaunce. þat is swiche þat it ne slydeþ nat in to outereþt foreine þinges. ne ne rec[e]lyueþ no strange þinges in hym. but ryzt as parmaynws seide in grek of þilke deuyne substaunce. he seide þus þat þilke deuyne substaunce torneþ þe worlde and þilke cercle moeueable of þinges while þilke dyuyne substaunce kepþ it self wiþ outen moeuyng. þat * is to seyne þat it ne moeuiþ neuere mo. and ȝitte it moeueþ alle oþer þinges. but na-þeles yif I [haue] stered resouns þat ne ben nat taken fro wiþ oute þe compas of þe þinge of whiche we treten. but resouns þat ben bystowed wiþ inne þat compas þere nis nat whi þat þou sholde[st] merueylen. sen þou hast lerned by þe sentence of plato þat nedes þe wordes moten ben cosynes to þo þinges of whiche þei spoken. 3020

FELIX QUI POTERIT. ET CETERA.

[The 12. Meter.]

Happy is he that hath seen the lucid spring of truth! Happy the man that hath freed himself from terrestrial chains! The Thracian poet, consumed with grief for the loss of his wife, sought relief from music. His mournful songs drew the woods along; the rolling rivers ceased to flow; the savage beasts became heedless of their prey; the timid hare was not agast at the hound. But the

Blisful is þat man þat may seen þe clere welle of good. Blisful is he þat may vnbynde hym fro þe bonde of heuy erpe. ¶ þe poete of *tracé* [orpheus] þat somtyme hadde ryzt greet sorowe for þe deef of hys wijf. aftir þat he hadde maked by hys wepely songes þe wodes meueable to rennen. and hadde ymaked þe ryueres to stonden stille. and maked þe hertys and hyndes to ioignen dredles hir sides to cruel lyouns to herkene his songe. and had[de] maked þat þe hare was nat agast of þe hounde whiche þat was plesed by hys songe. so þat whane þe most[e] ardaunt loue of hys wijf brende þe

3004 þe þinge—the the thing
3005 ȝifte—gift
some tyme prayden —
whilom preyeden
3006 [the]—from C.
3007 swiche—swich
3009 parmaynws — a par-
menides
3011 worlde—world
3013 while—whil
wiþ outen—with owte

3013 seyne—seyne
3014 ȝitte—ȝit
oþer—oother
3015 [haue]—from C.
3016 whiche—which
3017 wiþ inne—with in
3020 cosynes—MS. conceyued,
C. cosynes
þo—þe
whiche—which
3023 vnbynde—vnbyndyn

3022 bonde—bondes
3023 [orpheus]—from C.
somyne—whilom
3024 sorowe—sorwe
3025 dredles—dredeles
to herkene—forto herken
3029 had[de]—hadde
3030 þat (2)—omitted
3031 most[e]—moste

entrailes of his brest. ne þe songes þat hadde ouer
comen alle þinges ne myȝten nat assuage hir lorde
orpheus. ¶ He pleyned[e] hym of þe godes þat weren
cruel to hym. he wente hym to þe houses of helle and
þere he tempred[e] hys blaundissyng songes by re-
sounyng of hys strenges. ¶ And spak and song in
wepyng alle þat enar he hadde reseuyed and laued
oute of þe noble welles of hys modir calliope þe god-
desse. and he song wiþ as mychel as he myȝt[e] of
wepynga. and wiþ as myche as loue þat doubled[e] his
sorwe myȝt[e] ;euene hym and teche hym in his seke
herte. ¶ And he commoeuede þe helle and requered[e]
and souȝte by swete preiere þe lordes of soules in helle
of relesyng. þat is to seyne to ȝelden hym hys wif.
¶ Cerberus þe porter of helle wiþ his þre heuedes was
cauȝt and al abaist for þe new[e] songe. and þe þre god-
desse furijȝ and vengerisse of felonies þat tourmenten
and agasten þe soules by anye wexen sorweful and sory
and wepen teres for pitee. þan was nat þe heued of
Ixione ytourmented by þe ouerþrowing whele. ¶ And
tantalus þat was destroyed by þe woodnesse of longe
þrust dispiseþ þe flodes to drynke. þe fowel þat hyȝt
voltor þat etip þe stomak or þe giser of ticius is so ful-
filled of his songe þat it nil etyn ne tyren no more.
¶ Atte þe laste þe lorde and Iuge of soules was moeued
to misericordes and cried[e] we ben ouer comen quod
he. yif[e] we to orpheus his wijf to bere hym com-
paignye he haþ welle I-bouȝt hir by his faire songe and

songs that did all
things tame, could
not allay their
master's ardent
love. He bewailed
the cruelty of the
gods above, and
descended to
Pluto's realm.

3036

There he struck
his tuneful strings
and sang, ex-
hausting all the
harmonious art
imparted to him
by his mother
Calliope.

In songs dictated
both by grief and
love, he implored
the infernal
powers to give
him back his
Eurydice.

3044

Cerberus, Hell's
three-headed
porter, stood
amazed;
the Furies, tor-
mentors of guilty
souls, did weep;

3049

Ixion, tormented
by the revolving
wheel, found rest;
Tantalus, suffer-
ing from a long
and raging thirst,
despised the
stream;
and the greedy
vulture did cease
to eat and tear the
growing liver of
Tityus. At length
Pluto himself re-
lent, crying
out, 'We are
overcome! Let
us give him back
his wife, he hath
well won her by
his song.'

3032 hadde—hadden
3033 assuage—asswagen
lords—lord
3034 pleyned[e]—pleynede
godes—heuene goodes
3035 wente—MS. wenten, C.
wente
3036 tempred[e] hys—tem-
prede hise
3037 of hys—C. omits
spak—MS. spakke, C. spak
song—MS. songe, C. soonge
3038 alle—al
3039 owte—owt
goddesse—goddess
3040 song—MS. songe, C.

soonge
mychel—mochel
3041 myche—moche
doubled[e]—dowblede
3042 myȝt[e]—myhte
ȝeuene—ȝeue
teche—thechen
in—herte—omitted
3043 commoeuede—MS. com-
aunded, C. commoeuede
3044 souȝte—by—sowhte
3045 ȝelden—ȝylden
3046 his—hise
3047 cauȝt—MS. cauȝte, C.
cawht
new[e] songe—newe song

3049 anye — sorweful —
any woxen sorful
3050 þan—tho ne
3051 whele—wheel
3053 þrust—thurst
hyȝt—hight
3054 fulfilled—fullyld
3055 songe—song
3056 Atte—At
lords—lord
3057 cried[e]—cryde
3058 yif[e]—ȝue
3059 haþ—MS. haþe
welle—wel
faire—C. omits
songe—song

But we will lay
this injunction
upon him. Till
he escape the in-
fernal bounds, he
shall not cast a
backward look.
But, who shall
give a lover any
law? Love is a
greater law than
may be given to
any earthly man.
Alas! having left
the realms of
night, Orpheus
cast a look behind
and lost his too-
much-loved Enri-
dice. This fable
belongs to all you,
whose minds
would view the
Sovereign Good.

For he who fixes
his thoughts upon
earthly things and
low, must lose the
noble and heaven-
imparted Good.

his ditee. but we wil putten a lawe in þis. *and* couen-
aunt in þe zifte. þat is to seyne. þat til he be out of
helle yif he loke byhynden hym [þat] hys wijf shal
comen azeine to vs ¶ but what is he þat may zeue a
lawe to loueres. loue is a gretter lawe *and* a strengere to
hym self þan any lawe þat men may zeuen. ¶ Allas
whan Orpheus *and* his wijf were al most at þe termes of
þe nyzt. þat is to seyne at þe last[e] boundes of helle.
Orpheus looked[e] abakwarde on Erudice his wijf *and*
lost[e] hir *and* was deed. ¶ þis fable apperteineþ to
3071 in to þe souereyne day. þat is to seyne to clerenes[se]
of souereyne goode. ¶ For who so þat euere be so ouer
comen þat he fycche hys eyen in to þe put[te] of helle.
þat is to seyne who so setteþ his þouztes in erþely
þinges. al þat euer he haþ drawen of þe noble good
3076 celestial he lesiþ it whan he lokeþ þe helles. þat is to
seyne to lowe þinges of þe erþe.

EXPLICIT LIBER TERCIVS.

[* fol. 24 b.]

*INCIPIT LIBER QUARTUS.

HEC CUM PHILOSOPHIA DIGNITATE VULTUS.

[The 1st prose.]

When P. with
grace and dignity
had poured forth
her songs, I, not
quite guilt of my
load of grief, in-
terrupted her as
she was contin-
uing her discourse.

3082 All your dis-
courses, O my
conductress to the

Whanne philosophie hadde songen softly *and* delita-
bly þe forseide þinges kepynge þe dignitee of hir
choere in þe wey3te of hir wordes. I þan þat ne hadde
nat al outerly forȝeten þe wepyng *and* mourning
3082 pat was set in myne herte for-brek þe entencioun of hir
pat entended[e] 3itte to seyne oþer þinges. ¶ Se quod
I. þou þat art gideresse of verray ly3te þe þinges þat þou

3080 wil putten—wol putte
3082 byhynden—by-hynde
[þat]—from C.
3083 to—vn-to
3084 gretter—gret
3086 were al most—weren
almost
3087 last[e]—laete
3088 looked[e] abakwarde—

lookede abakward
3088 last[e]—loste
3070 þou3te—thowht
3071 clerenes[se]—clernessee
3073 souereyne goode—soue-
reyn god
3073 put[te]—putte
3074 setteþ—sette
3075 haþ—MS. haþe

3078 softly—softely
3080 choere in—cheere *and*
3082 set—MS. sette, C. set
myne—Myn
for-brek—MS. for-breke, C.
Forbrak
3083 entended[e]—entendede
3084 ly3te—lyht

hast seid [me] hider to ben to me so clere *and* so shew-
yng by þe deuyne lokyng of hem *and* by þi resouns þat
þei ne mowe nat ben ouercomen. ¶ And pilke pingus
þat þou toldest me. al be it so þat I hadde som tyme
fo[r]ȝeten hem for [the] sorwe of þe wronge þat hap ben
don to me. ȝit napeles þei ne were nat alouterly vn-
knownen to me. but þis same is namly a gret cause of
my sorwe. þat so as þe gouernoure of þinges is goode.
yif þat yuelys mowen ben by any weyes. or ellys yif
þat yuelys passen wiþ outen punyssheinge. þe whiche
þinge onoly how worpi it is to ben wondred vpon. þou
considerest it weel þi self certeynly. but ȝitte to þis
þing þere is an oþer þing y-ioigned more to ben ywon-
dred vpon. ¶ For felonie is emperisse *and* flowreþ ful of
rychesse. and vertues nis nat al onoly wiþ outen medes.
but it is cast vndir *and* fortroden vndir þe feet of fe-
lonous folk. *and* it abieþ þe tourmentes in sted of
wicked felouns ¶ Of al[le] whiche þing þer nis no wyȝt
þat [may] merueyllen ynouȝ ne compleyne þat swiche
þinges ben don in þe regne of god þat alle þinges woot.
and alle þinges may *and* ne wool nat but only goode
þinges. ¶ þan seide she þus. certys quod she þat were
a grete meruayle *and* an enbaissynge wiþouten ende.
and wel more horrible þan alle monstres yif it were as
þou wenest. þat is to sein. þat in þe ryȝt ordeyne house
of so mochel a fader *and* an ordenour of meyne. þat þe
vessels þat ben foule *and* vyle sholde ben honoured
and heried. and þe precious uesteles sholde ben de-
fouled *and* vyle. but it nis nat so. For yif þe þinges

true light! have been very clear and unanswerable, both by the divine testimony which they carry along with them, and by thy irrefragable arguments. Through the oppression of grief I had forgotten these truths, but was not wholly ignorant of them. The principal cause of my trouble is this—that, whilst the absolute Ruler of all things is goodness itself, evil exists and is allowed to pass unpunished. This, to say the least, is astonishing.

3097

Moreover, while vice flourishes virtue is not only unrewarded, but trampled under foot by base and prodigal men, and suffers the punishment due to impiety. Here is cause for wonderment, since such things are possible under the government of an omniscient and omnipotent God, who wills nothing but what is the best.

3107

F. It were indeed, not only marvellous, but also horribly monstrous, if, in the well-regulated family of so great a master, the worthless vessels should be honoured and the precious ones be despised:—but it is not so. For if

3096 *seid*—MS. seide, C. seid
[me]—from C.
3098 *þi*—the
3097 *mowe*—mowen
3098 *som tyme*—whilom
3099 [the]—from C.
wronge—wrong
hap—MS. hape
3090 *don*—MS. done, C. don
were—weeren
3091 *namly*—namely
3092 *goode*—good
3093 *wiþ outen*—with owte

3096 *þinge*—thing
3097 *þere*—ther
ben wondred—be won-
dryd
3098 *flowreþ*—MS. folweþ,
C. flowrith
3099 *rychesse*—Rychesses
vertues—vertu
wiþ outen—with owte
3101 *in sted*—in stide
3102 *wicked*—wikkede
alle—alle
þing—thinges

3103 [may]—from C.
3104 *don*—MS. done, C. doon
3105 *wool*—wole
goode—good
3107 *gret*—gret
enbaissynge—embassinge
3108 *alle*—al
3109 *ordeyne house*—ordence
howe
3111, 3113 *vyle*—vyl
3112 *heried*—he heried
sholde—sholden
3113 *þe*—the

the conclusions we have come to, be sound and irrefragable, we must confess that under God's rule the good are always powerful and mighty, and the wicked weak and contemptible; that vice never passes unpunished, nor virtue goes unrewarded; that happiness attends good men, and misfortune falls to the lot of the wicked. These and many other truths of like nature shall be proved to thee, and shall put an end to thy complaints, and strengthen thee with firmness and solidity. Having shown you a picture of true felicity, and wherein it resides, I shall now trace out the way which will lead you to your home. I will give your soul wings to soar aloft, so that all tribulation being removed, you may, under my guiding, by my road, and with my vehicle, return whole and sound into your own country. [The tyrant metur.] I have nimble wings that enable the mind to rise from earth to heaven, to leave the clouds behind, to pass the region of perpetual flame, and to reach the starry mansion, journeying either by Phœbus'

pat I haue concluded a litel here byforne ben kept hool and vnaced. pou shalt wel knowe by þe auctorite of god. of þe whos regne I speke þat certys þe good[e] folk ben alwey myzty. and shrewes ben alwey yuel and feble. ne þe vices ben neuere mo wiþ outen payne: ne þe vertues ne ben nat wiþ outen mede. and þat blisfulnesses comen alwey to goode folke. and infortune cometh alwey to wicked folke. ¶ And pou shalt wel knowe many[e] þinges of þis kynde þat sholle cessen þi pleyntes. and stedfast þe wiþ stedfast saddenesse. ¶ And for pou hast seyn þe forme of þe verray blisfulnesse by me þat [haue] somtyme I-shewed it þe. And pou hast knowen in whom blysfulnesse is set. alle þinges I treted þat I trowe ben nessessarie to put[te] furþe ¶ I shal shewe þe. þe weye þat shal brynge þe azeine vnto þi house and I shal ficche feþeres in þi þouzt by whiche it may arysen in heyzte. so þat al tribulacioun don away. pou by my gidyng & by my pape and by my sledes shalt mowen retourne hool and sounde in to þi contre. 3132

SUNT ETENIM PENNE. ET CETERA.

I Haue for soþe swifte feþeres þat surmounten þe heyzt of þe heuene whan þe swifte þouzt hap cloped it self. in þo feþeres it dispiseþ þe hat[e]ful erþes. and surmounteþ þe heyzenesse of þe greet[e] eyir. and it seiþ þe cloudes by-hynde hir bak and passeþ þe heyzt of þe regioun of þe fire þat eschaufþ by þe swifte moeuyn of þe firmament. til þat she a-reisip hir in til þe houses þat

3114 here byforne—her by-
forne
3115 kept—MS. kepte, C. kept
3116 good[e]—goode
3117 alwey (2)—feble—al-
wey owt cast and feble
3118, 3119 wiþ outen—with
outen
3119 vertues—virtuous
3123 many[e]—many
sholle cessen—shollen
cessen
3123 stedfast—stedfast—
strengthyn the with
stidfast

3124 seyn—MS. seyne, C.
seyn
3125 [haue]—from C.
sometyme—whilom
3126 set—MS. sette, C. I-set
3127 put[te] furþe—putten
forth
3128 weye—wey
brynge—bryngen
bi house—thin hows
3129 fliche—flychen
3130 arysen—arysen
don—MS. done, C. ydoñ
3131 pape—paath
shalt mowen—shal move

3132 sounde—sownd
3133 heyzt of þe heuene—
heyhte of heuene
3134 hap—MS. hape
3136 heyzenesse—eyir—
Roundness of the grete
ayr
3137 seiþ—seith
3137 his—his
3138 fro—Fyr
eschaufþ—MS. eschaufþe
3139 she—he
hir—hym

beren þe sterres. *and* ioygneþ hir weyes wiþ þe sonne
phebus. *and* felawshiþeþ þe weye of þe olde colde
saturnus. *and* she ymaked a knyzt of þe clere sterre.
þat is to seyne þat þe soule is maked goddys knyzt by
þe sakyng of treuþe to comen to þe verray knowlege of
god. *and* þilke soule renne[þ] by þe cercle * of þe sterres
in alle þe places þere as þe shynynge nyzt is depeynted.
þat is to seyne þe nyzt þat is cloudeles. for on nyztes þat
ben cloudeles it semeþ as þe heuene were peynted wiþ
dyuerse ymages of sterres. *and* whan þe soule haþ gon
ynouþ she shal forleten þe last[e] poynt of þe heuene.
and she shal pressen *and* wenden on þe bak of þe swifte
firmament. *and* she shal ben maked perfit of þe drede-
fulle clerenesse of god. ¶ þere haldeþ þe lorde of kynges
þe ceptre of his myzt *and* attempereþ þe gouernementes
of þis worlde. *and* þe shynynge iuge of þinges stable in
hym self gouerneþ þe swifte carte. þat is to seyne þe
circular moeyng of [the] sonne. *and* yif þi weye ledeþ
þe aþeyne so þat þou be brouzt pider. þan wilt þou seye
now þat þat is þe contre þat þou requeredest of whiche þou
ne haddeest no mynde. but now it remembreþ me wel
here was I born. here wil I fastne my degree. here wil
I dwelle. but yif þe lyke þan to loken on þe derkenesse
of þe erþe þat þou hast for-leten. þan shalt þou seen þat
þise felonous tyrauntes þat þe wrecched[e] poeple dredeþ
now shule ben exiled from þilke faire contre.

radiant path, or
accompanying
cold and aged
Saturn, or riding,
3142

as a soldier, with
Mars. [Chaucer's
Gloss.] Through
every sphere she
(the mind) runs

[* fol. 25.]
where night is
most cloudless and
where the sky is
decked with stars,
until she reaches
the heaven's
utmost sphere—
then pressing on
she shall be pre-
pared to see the
true Source of
Light, where the
great King of
kings bears his
mighty sceptre,
and holds the
reins of the
universe. Here
the great Judge,
standing in
shining robes,
firmly guides his
winged chariot,
and rules the
tumultuous affairs
of the world.

If you at length
shall arrive at
this abode, you
will say this is
my country—here
I was born—and
here will I abide.

3161

And should you
deign to look on
the gloomy earth,
you'll see those
tyrants, the fear
of wretched folk,
banished from
those fair realms.

3140 *hir*—his
3141 *weye*—wey
þe—*saturnus*—MS. sa-
turnus þe olde colde
3142 *saturnus*—*saturnis*
ske—he
3143 *soule*—thought
3144 *treuþe*—trouthe
knowlege—knoledge
3145 *soule*—thought
3146 *depaynted*—painted
3149-50 *and whan*—*she shal*

—*and* whanne he hath
I-doon there I-nowh he
shal
3149 *hap*—MS. hape
3150 *þe last[e]*—*heuene*—
the laste heuene
3151-2 *ske*—he
3152-3 *of þe*—*of god*—of the
worshipful lynt of god
3153 *þere haldeþ*—ther halt
3155 *þis worlde*—the world
3156 *carte*—cart or wayn

3157 [*the*]—from O.
3159 *whiche*—which
3161 *here* (1, 2, 3)—her
borne—MS. borne, C. born
soil (1)—woi
soil (2)—woie
3163 *lyke*—liketh
darkenesse—dyrknesses
3164 *wrecched[e]*—wrecch-
ede
3166 *shule*—shollen
from—fro

TUNC EGO PAPE INQUAM. ET CETERA.

[The 2^d prose.]

B. Ah! thou procurest me great things indeed!—but without delay, satisfy the expectations you have raised.

P. You must first be convinced that the good are always strong and powerful and the wicked destitute of strength. These assertions do

3173 mutually demonstrate each other. For since good and evil are contrary, if good be powerful evil must be impotent. And if the frailty of evil is known, the strength and stability of good must also be known to you. But to convince you I shall proceed to prove it from both these principles, establishing these truths, by arguments drawn first from one of these topics and then from the other. Two things are necessary to every action—the Will and the Power; if either be wanting, nothing can be effected. A man can do nothing without the concurrence of his will, and if power faileth the will is of no effect. Hence, if you see a person desirous

3191 of getting what he cannot procure, you are sure he lacks power to obtain it. And if you see another do what he had a mind to do, can you doubt

h Anne seide I þus. [owh] I wondre me þat þou by-
hetest me so grete þinges. ne I ne doute nat þat þou
ne mayst wel performe þat þou by-hetest. but I preie þe
oonly þis. þat þou ne tarie nat to telle me þilke þinges
þat þou hast meoued. first quod she þou most nedes
knownen. þat good[e] folk ben al wey strong[e] and
myzty. and þe shrewes ben feble and desert and naked
of alle strengþes. and of þise þinges certys eueryche of
hem is declared and shewed by oper. ¶ For so as good
and yuel ben two contraries. yif so be þat goode be
stedfast. þan sheweþ þe fieblesse of yuel al openly. and
yif þou knowe clerely þe freelnesse of yuel. þe stedfast-
nesse of goode is knownen. but for as moche as þe fey of
my sentence shal be þe more ferme and haboundaunt. I
wil goon by þat oon wey and by þat oper and I wil con-
ferme þe þinges þat ben purposed now on þis side and
now on þat syde. ¶ Two þinges þer ben in whiche þe
effect of alle þe dedes of man kynde standiþ. þat is to
seyn. wil and power. and yif þat oon of þise two fayleþ
þere nis no þing þat may be don. for yif þat wil lakkeþ
þere nys no wyzt þat vndirtakeþ to done þat he wol not
don. and yif power fayleþ þe wille nis but in ydel and
stant for nauȝt. and þer of comeþ it þat yif þou se a
wyzt þat wolde geten þat he may nat geten. þou mayst
nat douten þat power ne fayleþ hym to hauen þat he
wolde. ¶ þis is open and clere quod I. ne it may nat
ben denyed in no manere. and yif þou se a wyzt quod
she. þat hap don þat he wolde don þou nilt nat douten
þat he ne hap had power to done it. no quod. I. and in
þat. þat euery wyzt may. in þat þat men may holden

3186 [owh]—from C.
3171 good[e]—goode
strong[e]—stronge
3173 desert—dishert
3173 eueryche—euerych
3175 goode—good
3176 steadfast—stidefast
3177 freelnesse—freelnesse
stedfastnesse—stidefast.

nesse
3178 goode—good
3180 oon—oo
wil (2)—wile
3185-6 þere—ther
3185 don—MS. done, C. don
3186 done—don
3187 wille—wil
3188 comeþ—comht

3189 mayst—MS. mayste,
C. mayst
3191 clere—cler
3192 denyed—denoyed
3193-4 hap—MS. hape
3193 don (both)—MS. done,
C. don
3194 had—MS. hadde, C. had
done—don

hym my3ty. as who seip in as moche as a man is my3ty
to done a ping. in so moche men halden hym my3ty.
and in þat þat he ne may. in þat men demen hym to
ben feble. I confesse it wel quod I. Remembriþ þe quod
she þat I. haue gadred *and* shewed by forseide resouns
þat al þe entencioun of þe wil of mankynde whiche þat
is lad by diuerse studies hastiþ to comen to blisfulnesse.
¶ It remembreþ me wel quod I þat it hath ben shewed.
and recorderþ þe nat þan quod she. þat blisfulnesse is
pilke same goode þat men requeren. so þat whan þat
blisfulnesse is requered *of alle. þat goode [also] is re-
quered *and* desired of al. It recorderþ me wel quod I.
for haue it gretly alwey ficche[d] in my memoria. alle
folk þan quod she goode *and* eke badde enforcen hem
wiþ oute difference of entencioun to comen to goode.
þat is a uerray consequence quod I. and certeyne is quod
she þat by þe getyng of goode ben men ymakend goode.
þis is certeyne quod. I. ¶ þan geten goode men þat þei
desiren. so semeþ it quod I. but wicked[e] folk quod
she yif þei geten þe goode þat þei desiren þei [ne]
mowen nat ben wicked. so is it quod I. ¶ þan so as
þat oon *and* þat oper [quod she] desiren good. *and* þe
goode folk geten good *and* nat þe wicked folk ¶ þan
nis it no doute þat þe goode folk ne ben my3ty *and* þe
wicked folk ben feble. ¶ who so þat euer quod I
doutet of þis. he ne may nat considre þe nature of
þinges. ne þe consequence of resoun. and ouer þis quod
she. ¶ yif þat þer ben two þinges þat han o same
purpos by kynde. *and* þat one of hem pursueþ *and* per-
formeþ pilke same þinge by naturel office. *and* þat oper
ne may nat done þilk naturel office. but folweþ by
oper manere þan is couenable to nature ¶ Hym þat

that he had the
power to do it?
B. No, surely.
P. A man, then,
is esteemed
powerful in re-
spect of what he
is able to do, and
weak in relation
to what he is un-
able to perform.
B. That is true.
P. Do you re-
member that I
proved that the
will of man,
following different
pursuits, seeks
happiness only?
Do you recol-
lect too, that it
has been shown
that happiness is
[* fol. 25 b.]
the supreme good
of men—and all
desire this good,
since all seek
happiness?
All men, then,
good and bad, seek
to acquire good?
And it is certain
that when men
obtain good they
become good?
3212

B. It is most
certain.
P. Do good men,
then, get what
they desire?
B. It seems so.
P. If evil men ob-
tain the good,
they can be no
longer evil?
B. It is so.
P. Since then
both parties
pursue the good,
which only the
virtuous obtain,
we must believe
that good men are
powerful, and that
the wicked are
weak and feeble?
B. None can
doubt this, save
such as either
consider not
rightly the nature
of things, or are
incapable of com-
prehending the
force of any
reasoning.
P. If two beings
have the same
end in view—

3196 *as moche*—so moche
3197 *done*—doon
moche—mochel
halden—halt
3201 *whiche*—which
3202 *lad*—MS. ladde. C. lad
3203 *is hath ben*—MS. I herde

þe, C. it hath ben
3206-8 *goode*—good
3206 [also]—from C.
3207 *al*—alle
It—I—it nerecordeth me
nat quod I
3210-12(1)-15 *goode*—good

3214 *wicked[e]*—wikkede
3215 [ne]—from C.
3216 *mowen*—mowe
3217 [quod she]—from C.
3218 *wikked*—wikke (ʔ wikke)
3220 *wikked*—wikkede
3226 *þilk*—þilke

and one of them accomplishes his purpose by the use of natural means, while the other not using legitimate means does not attain his end—which of these two is the most powerful?

B. Illustrate your meaning more clearly.

P. The motion of walking is natural to man? And this motion is the natural office of the feet? Do you grant this?

B. I do.

P. If, then, he who is able to use his feet walks, whilst another lacking this power creeps on his hands—surely he that is able to move naturally upon his feet is more powerful than he who

3243

cannot.

P. The good and bad seek the supreme good: the good by the natural means of virtue—the wicked by gratifying diverse desires of earthly things (which is not the natural way of obtaining it). Do you think otherwise?

B. The consequence is plain, and that follows from what has been granted—that the good are powerful, while the wicked are feeble.

P. You rightly anticipate me; for it is a good sign, as physicians well know, when Nature exerts herself and resists the malady. But, as you are so quick of appre-

acomplisþ hys purpos kyndely. and ȝit he ne acomplisþ nat hys owen purpos. wheþer of þise two demest þou for more myȝty. ¶ yif þat I coniecte quod .I. þat þou wilt seye algates. ȝit I desire to herkene it more pleynely of þe. þou nilt nat þan denye quod she þat þe moeuementȝ of goynge nis in men by kynde. no for soþe quod I. ne þou ne douteſt nat quod she þat þilke naturel office of goynge ne be þe office of feet. I ne doute it nat quod .I. þan quod she yif þat a wyȝt be myȝty to moeue and goþ vpon hys feet. and anoþer to whom þilke naturel office of feet lakkeþ. enforceþ hym to gone crepynge vpon hys handes. ¶ whiche of þise two auȝte to ben holden more myȝty by ryȝt. knyȝt furþe þe remenaunt quod I. ¶ For no wyȝt ne douteþ þat he þat may gone by naturel office of feet. ne be more myȝty þan he þat ne may nat ¶ but þe souereyne good quod she þat is euenlyche purposed to þe good folk and to badde. þe good folke seken it by naturel office of uertues. and þe shrewes enforcen hem to geten it by dyuerse couetise of erpely þinges. whiche þat nis no naturel office to geten þilke same souereyne goode. trowest þou þat it be any oþer wyse. nay quod .I. for þe consequence is open and shewynge of þinges þat I haue graunted. ¶ þat nedes goode folk moten ben myȝty. and shrewes feble and vmyȝty. ¶ þou rennest aryȝt byfore me quod she. and þis is þe iugement þat is to seyn. ¶ I iuge of þe ryȝt as þise leches ben wont forto hopen of seke folk whan þei aperceyuen þat nature is redressed and wiȝstondeþ to þe maladie. ¶ But for I see þe now al redy to þe vndirstandyng I shal shewe þe more þilke and continual resouns. ¶ For loke now

3239 *owen*—owne

3231 *wilt*—wolt

herkene—herkne

3233 *pleynely*—pleynly

denye—denoie

3233 *moeuementȝ*—Moeuement

3237 *goþ*—MS. goþe

hys—hise

3238 *gone*—goon

3239 *hys*—hise

whiche—which

3240 *more*—the Moore

furþe—forth

3243 *gone*—gon

3245 *good*—goode

3246 *uertues*—vertuus

3247 *whiche*—which

3248 *goode*—good

3253 *byfore*—by-forn

3254 *forto*—to

3255 *seke*—sike

how gretly shewiþ þe feblesse *and* infirmite of wicked folke. þat ne mowen nat come to þat hire naturel entencioun ledeþ hem. *and* zitte almost pilk naturel entencioun constreineþ hem. ¶ *¶* and what were to deme þan of shrewes. yif pilke naturel helpe hadde for-leten hem. ¶ þe whiche naturel helpe of entencioun goþ alwey byforne hem. *and* is so grete þat vnneþ it may be ouercomen. ¶ Considre þan how gret defeaute of power *and* how gret feblesse þere is in grete felonous folk as who seiþ þe gretter þinges þat ben coueitid *and* þe desire nat accomplissed of þe lasse myzt is he þat coueiteth it *and* may nat acomplisse. ¶ And forþi philosophie seiþ þus by souereyne good. ¶ Sherewes ne requere nat lyzt[e] medes ne veyne gaines whiche þei ne may nat folwen ne holden. but þei faylen of pilke some of þe heyzte of þinges þat is to seyne souereyne good. ne þise wrecches ne comen nat to þe effect of souereyne good. * þe whiche þei enforcen hem oonly to geten by nyztes *and* by dayes. ¶ In þe getyn[g] of whiche goode þe strengþe of good folk. is ful wel ysen. For ryzt so as þou myztest demen hym myzty of goynge þat goþ on hys feet til he myzt[e] come to pilke place fro þe whiche place þere ne lay no wey forþer to be gon. Ryzt so most þou nedes demen hym for ryzt myzty þat getiþ *and* atteiniþ to þe ende of alle þinges þat ben to desire. by-þonde þe whiche ende þat þer nis no þing to desire. ¶ Of whiche power of good folk men may conclude þat wicked men semen to ben bareyne *and* naked of alle strengþe. For whi forleten þei vertues *and* folwen vices. nis it nat for þat þei ne knowen nat þe goodes.

henson, I shall continue this mode of reasoning. The weakness of the wicked is conspicuous—they cannot attain the end to which their natural disposition prompts and almost compels them; what would become of them without this natural prompting, so powerful and irresistible? Consider how great is the impotence of the wicked. (The greater the things desired, but unaccomplished, the less is the power of him that desires, and is unable to attain his end.) The wicked seek after no trivial things—which they fail to obtain; but they aspire in

3275 vain to the sovereign good, which they endeavour [* fol. 26.] day and night to obtain. The good attain the end of their desires, and therein their power is manifested. For as you deem him a good walker that goes to the end of his journey, so you must esteem him powerful that attains his desires, beyond which there is nothing to desire. Wicked men, then, are destitute of those powers which the good so simply possess. Wherefore do they leave virtue, and follow vice? Is it because they are ignorant of good?

3259 *wicked*—wikkede
3260 *come*—comyu
3261 *pilk*—thilke
3262 *deme*—demen
3263-4 *helpe*—help
3264 *whiche*—which
3265 *gob*—MS. gobe
3265 *grote*—gret
3266 *enneþ*—vnnethe
3266 *be ouercomen*—ben ouer-
come
3267 *þere*—ther

grote—wikkede
3268 *þinges*—thing
3268 *ben*—is
3271 *Sherewes ne requere*—
ne shrewes ne requeren
3272 *lyzt[e]*—lyhte
3273 *veyne*—veyn
3274 *nat*—omitted
3275 *whiche*—which
3277 *getyn[g]*—getinge
3278 *whiche goode*—which good
3278 *ysen*—MS. and C. ysene

3279 *gob*—MS. gobe
3280 *myzt[e]*—myhte
3281 *þere*—ther
3281 *lay*—lays
3281 *forþer*—forthere
3281 *be*—ben
3283 *desire*—desired
3284 *þat*—omitted
3285 *whiche*—the which
3285 *þat*—þat the
3286 *ben*—be

What is more weak and base than the blindness of ignorance? Or do they know the way they ought to follow, but are led astray by lust and covetousness? And so, indeed, weak-minded men are overpowered by intemperance, for they cannot resist vicious temptations. Do they willingly desert Good and turn to Evil? If they do so, they not only cease to be powerful, but even cease to exist. For those who neglect the common end of all beings, cease to exist. You may marvel that I assert that the wicked, the majority of the human race, have no existence.

3304

but it is, however, most true. That the wicked are bad I do not deny—but I do not admit that they have any real existence. You may call a corpse a dead man, but you cannot with propriety call it a man. So the vicious are profligate men, but I cannot confess they absolutely exist. That thing exists that preserves its rank, nature, and constitution, but when it loses these essentials it ceases to be. But, you may say that a power to act, nor do I deny it; but their power is an effect of weakness. They can do evil, but this they could

¶ But what þing is more feble *and* more caitif þan is þe blyndenesse of ignoraunce. or ellys þei knowen ful wel whiche þinges þat þei auzten to folwen ¶ but lecherye *and* couetise ouerproweþ hem mysturned. ¶ *and* certis so dop distemperaunce to feble men. þat ne mowen nat wrastle azeins þe vices ¶ Ne knowen þei nat þan wel þat þei foreleten þe good wilfully. *and* turnen hem vilfully to vices. ¶ And in þis wise þei ne forleten nat oonly to ben myzty. but þei forleten al outerly in any wise forto ben ¶ For þei þat forleten þe comune fyn of alle þinges þat ben. þei for-leten also þerwiþ al forto ben. *and* perauenture it sholde semen to som folk þat þis were a merueile to seyne þat shrewes whiche þat contienen þe more partie of men ne ben nat. ne han no beynge. ¶ but napeles it is so. *and* þus stant þis þing for þei þat ben shrewes I denye nat þat þei ben shrewes. but I denye *and* sey[e] synplely *and* pleynly þat þei [ne] ben nat. ne han no beynge. for ryzt as þou myztest seyn of þe careyne of a man þat it were a ded man. ¶ but þou ne myztest nat synplely callen it a man. ¶ So graunt[e] I wel for soþe þat vicious folk ben wicked. but I ne may nat graunten absolutely *and* synplely þat þei ben. ¶ For pilk þing þat wiþ holdeþ ordre *and* kepiþ nature. pilk þing is *and* hap beynge. but þat þing þat faileþ of þat. þat is to seyne he þat forletip naturel ordre he for-letip pilk beyng þat is set in hys nature. but þou wolt sein þat shrewes mowen. ¶ Certys þat ne denye I nat. ¶ but certys hir power ne descendep nat of strengþe but of feblesse. for þei mowen don wickednesses. þe whiche þei ne myzten nat don yif þei myzten dwelle in þe forme *and*

3301 *auzten* to *folwen* —
overtaken follow
3303 *dop*—MS. *dope*, C. doth
3304 *erastle*—wristlen
3305 *vilfully*—wilfully
3307 *outerly*—owtrelly
3301 *seyne*—seyen
3304-5 *denye*—denoye

3305 *sey[e]* *synplely*—seye
synplely
3306 [ne]—from C.
3307 *seyne*—seyen
3308 *graunt[e]*—graunte
3311-12 *pilk*—thilke
3312 *hap*—MS. *habe*
3313 *þat* (1)—what

3313 *seyne*—seyen
3314 *pilk*—thilke
3315 *set*—MS. *sette*, C. *set*
3316 *denye*—denoye
3318 *don*—MS. *done*, C. *don*
3319 *myzten* (1)—myhte
dwelle—dwellin

in þe doynge of goode folke. ¶ And pilke power shewep ful euydently þat þei ne mowen ryzt nauzt. ¶ For so as I haue gadered *and* proued a lytel her by-forn þat yuel is nauzt. *and* so as shrewes mowen oonly but shrewednesse. þis conclusioun is al clere. þat shrewes ne mowen ryzt nat to han power. and for as moche as þou vndirstonde whiche is þe strengþe þat is power of shrewes. I haue diffinised a lytel here byforn þat no þing nis so myzty as souereyne good ¶ þat is soþe quod .I. [*and* thilke same souereyn good may don non yuel // Certes no quod I] ¶ Is þer any wyzt þan quod she þat wenip þat men mowen don alle þinges. No man quod .I. but yif he be out of hys witte. ¶ but certys shrewes mowen don yuel quod she. ¶ ȝe wolde god quod I þat þei ne myzten don none. þat quod she so as he þat is myzty to done oonly but good[e] þinges may don alle þinges. and þei þat ben myzty to done yuel[e] þinges ne mowen nat alle þinges. þan is þis open þing *and* manifest þat þei þat mowen don yuel beu of lasse power. and ȝitte to proue þis conclusioun þere helpþ me þis þat I haue shewed here byforn. þat al power is to be nombred amonge þinges þat men auzten requere. *and* haue shewed þat alle þinges þat auzten ben desired ben referred to good ryzt as to a manere heȝzte of hyr nature. ¶ But for to mowen don yuel *and* felonye ne may nat ben referred to good. þan nis nat yuel of þe nombre of þinges þat auzten. *be desired. but al power auzt[e] ben desired *and* requered. ¶ þan is it open *and* cler þat þe power ne þe moeuyng of shrewes nis no powers. *and* of alle þise þinges it shewep wel þat

not do, if they retained the power of doing good.

This power, then, clearly shows their impotence.

For as evil is nothing, it is clear that while the wicked can only do evil they can do nothing.

That you may understand the force of this power, I have proved that nothing is more powerful than the sovereign good.

B. That is true.

P. And that supreme good can do no evil?

B. Certainly not.

P. Is there any one who thinks that man can do all things?

B. No sane man can think so.

P. But men may do evil.

B. I would to God they could not.

P. Since he that can do good, can

do all things, and he that has power to do evil cannot do all things, therefore the evil-doers are less powerful. Let me add too that power is one of the things to be desired, and that all such things are to be referred to the chief good (the perfection of their nature). But the power of doing evil has no relation to that Good, therefore it is not desirable; but as

(* fol. 26 b.) all power is desirable, it is clear that the ability to do evil is not power. It clearly follows from this reasoning,

3330 *goode*—good
3324 *shrewednesse*—shrew-
ednesses
clere—clear
3326 *nat*—power—nawht
ne han no power
3328 *whiche*—which
þat is—of this
3337 *here*—her
3338 *nis*—is
3339 *soþe*—soth

3329, 3330 [*and thilke* —
quod I]—from C.
3334 *don*—MS. done, C. don
none þat—non thanne
3335 *done*—doon
good[e]—goode
3336 *don*—MS. done, C. don
done—don
3337 *yuel[e]*—yuele
þis—it
3339 *don*—MS. done, C. don

3339 *ȝitte*—yit
þere—ther
3340 *shewed here byforn*—
Ishewed her by-forn
al—alle
3341 *amonge*—among
3344 *don*—MS. done, C. don
3346 *auzten be*—owhte ben
3347 *al*—alle
auzt[e]—owhte

that the good only are powerful while the vicious are feeble. And Plato's opinion is hereby verified that the wise only have the power to do what they desire; the wicked may follow the dictates of their lusts, but their great aim and desire, i. e. HAPPINESS, they can never attain. The wicked may gratify their desires, thinking to attain the chief good (for which they wish), but they can never possess it, for impety and vice can never be crowned with happiness.

[The 14th Metaph.]
Whoever might strip of their purple coverings, proud kings, who, surrounded by their guards,

3364 sit on lofty thrones, and whose stern looks wear fierce threatenings, and boiling breasts breathe fury; would see those mighty lords inwardly fettered, and tormented by lust, passion, grief, and delusive hopes.

3371 Since, then, so many tyrants bear sway over one head—that lord, oppressed by so many masters (i. e. vices), is weak and feeble, and his actions are not obedient to his will.

þe goode folk ben certeynly myzty. and þe shrewes ben douteles vmyzty ¶ And it is clere and open þat pilke sentence of plato is uerray and soþe. þat seyh þat oonly wisemen may [doon] þat þei desiren. and shrewes mowen haunten þat hem lykep. but þat þei desiren þat is to seyne to comen to souereyne good þei ne han no power to acomplissen þat. ¶ For shrewes don þat hem list whan by þo pinges in whiche þei deliten þei wenen to atteyne to pilke good þat þei desiren. but þei ne geten ne atteynen nat þer to. ¶ for vices ne comen nat to blisfulnesse.

3360

QUOS UIDES SEDERE CELSOS.

Who so þat þe couertures of her veyn apparails myzt[e] strepen of þise proude kynges þat þou seest sitten on heyze in her chayeres glyterynge in shynyng purpre envyroned wip sorweful armures manasyng wip cruel mouþe. blowyng by woodnesse of herte. ¶ He sholde se þan þat ilke lordes beren wip inne hir corages ful streyte cheynes for leccherye tormentip hem on þat oon syde wip gredy venyms and troublable Ire þat ariseþ in hem þe floodes of troubynges tourmentip vpon þat oþer side hir þouzt. or sorwe halt hem wery or ycauht. or slidyng and disseyuyng hope tourmentip hem. And þerfore syn þou seest op heed. þat is to seyne oon tyraunt bere so many[e] tyrauntia. þan ne doþ pilk tyraunt nat þat he desirip. syn he is cast doune wip so many[e] wicked lordes. þat is to seyn wip so many[e] vices. þat han so wicked lordshipes ouer hym.

3377

3351 *clere*—cler
3352 *soþe*—soth
þat *seyh*—MS. but siþe, C.
þat *seyth*
3353 [*doon*—from C.
3355 *seyne*—seyn
3357 *whiche*—which
3361-63 *her*—hir
3362 *myzt[e]*—myhte

3363 *heyze*—heygh
3364 *sorweful*—sorwful
3365 *mouþe*—Mowth
3366 *se*—seen
ilke—thilke
3368 *on*—in
3369 *hem*—hym
3371 *disseyuyng*—deceyunge

3373 *seyne*—seyn
bere—beeren
3373-75-76 *many[e]*—manye
3373 *tyrauntia*—tyranyes
3374 *doþ*—MS. doþe
pilk—thilke
3375 *downe*—down
wicked—wikede
3376 *wicked*—wikedly

VIDES NE IGITUR QUANTO.

Seest þou nat þan in how gret filþe þise shrewes ben
ywrapped. *and* wiþ whiche cleernesse þise good
folk shynen. In þis shewep it wel þat to good folk ne
lakkeþ neuer mo hir medes. ne shrewes ne lakken
neuer mo tourmentia. for of alle pinges þat ben ydon
pilke þing for whiche any þing is doon. it semeþ as by
ryzt þat pilke þing be þe mede of þat. as þus. ¶ yif a
man renneþ in þe stadie or in þe forlonge for þe corone.
þan lieþ þe mede in þe corone for whiche he renneþ.
¶ And I haue shewed þat blisfulnesse is pilke same
good for whiche þat allé þingus ben don. þan is pilke
same good purposed to þe werkes of mankynde ryzt as
a comune mede. whiche mede ne may ben disseuered
fro good folk. for no wyzt as by ryzt fro þennes forþe
þat hym lakkip goodnesse ne shal ben cleped good.
For whiche þing folk of good[e] maneres her medes ne
forsaken hem neuer mo. For al be it so þat sherewes
waxen as wood as hem list aþeynes good[e] folk. zitte
neuer þe les þe corone of wise men ne shal nat fallen
ne faden. ¶ For foreine shrewednesse ne bynymeþ
nat fro þe corages of good[e] folk hire propre honoure.
but yif þat any wyzt reioiseþ hem of goodnesse þat þei
had[de] taken fro wiþoute. as who seiþ yif [þat] any
wyzt had[de] hys goodnesse of any oþer man þan of
hym self. certys he þat 3af hym pilke goodnesse or
ellys som oþer wyzt myzt[e] bynym[e] it hym. but for
as moche as to euery wyzt hys owen propre bounte
3eueþ hym hys mede. þan at arst shal he faylen of
mede whan he forletip to ben good. *and* at þe laste so
as alle medes ben requered for men wenen þat þei ben

[The 11j.th prose.]

See you not
in how great and
filthy a mire the
wicked wallow?
This is a proof
that good folks
do not go unre-
warded, nor do
the evil-doers
escape punish-
ment. Every ac-
tion is done for a
certain end, and
that end is the re-
ward of the action.
But Happiness is
that good for
which all things
are done. There-
fore happiness is
the reward which
all the human
race seek as the
reward of their
actions. This
good is insepar-
able from the vir-
tuous, therefore
virtue can never
want its reward.
Evil men may
rage as they

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please against the
good, but the
crown of the wise
shall not fall nor
fade. The wicked-
ness of another
cannot deprive a
virtuous soul of
its own honour.
If a man pride
himself on the
possession of an
advantage re-
ceived from
another, he may
be deprived of it,
either by the
giver or by others.
But, as the re-
ward of the
virtuous is derived
from virtue, a
man cannot lose
this meed unless
he ceases to be
virtuous. Lastly,
since a reward is
desired because it
is supposed to be
a good, can we be-
lieve that he who
is capable of good
is deprived of the
recompence?

3379 *whiche*—which
3390 *good*—goode
3391 *ne* (3)—omitted
3393 *whiche*—which
3396 *forlonge*—forlong
3398-99-90 *whiche*—which
3391 *forþe*—forth
3393 *whiche*—which

3393 *good[e]*—goode
3396 *wood*—woode
good[e]—goode
3396 *les*—leese
ne—omitted
3398 *good[e]*—goode
3399 *reioiseþ*—reioyes
hem—hym

3399 *þei had[de]*—he hadde
3400 *[þat]*—from O.
3401 *had[de]*—hadde
3402 *seif*—M.S. seik
3403 *myzt[e]* *bynym[e]*—
myhte be-nyme
3404 *owen*—owne
3406 *laste*—last

What reward
shall he receive?
Certainly the
[* fol. 27.]
fairest and richest
of all rewards.
Call to mind that
excellent corollary
I have already
given thee, and
reason thus:—
Since the supreme
good is happiness,
it follows that all
good men are
happy in as much
as they are good;
but if they are
happy they must
become as it were
gods. The re-
ward (i. e. divini-
ty) of the righte-
ous is such that
no time can im-
pair it, no power
can diminish it,
nor can any
wickedness ob-
scure it. Since,
then, happiness
belongs to good
men, punishment
inseparably at-
tends the wicked.
For since good
and evil are con-

3424

traries, so are
rewards and
punishments. It
is evident that
rewards follow
good actions, and
punishments at-
tend evil actions;
then as virtue it-
self is the reward
of the virtuous,
so vice is the
punishment of
the vicious. He
who is punished
with pain and
uneasiness knows
that he is afflicted
with evil. If,
then, the wicked
did rightly under-
stand themselves
they would per-
ceive that they
are not exempted
from punishment.
Since vice, the
extreme and
worst kind of evil,
not only afflicts
them, but infects
and entirely

good[e]. who is he *pat wolde deme pat he pat is ryzt*
*myzty of goode were partles of mede. *and of what*
mede shal he be gerdoned. certys of ryzt faire mede
and ryzt greet abouen alle medes. ¶ Remembre þe of
pilk noble corolarie þat I 3af þe a lytel here byforne.
and gadre it to gidre in þis manere. so as god hym self
is blisfulnesse. þan is it clere and certeyn. pat alle good
folk ben makid blisful for þei ben good[e]. and pilke
folk þat ben blisful it accordip and is couenable to ben
godde[s]. þan is þe mede of goode folk swiche. pat no
day [ne] shal enpeyren it. ne no wickednesse shal en-
dirken it. ne power of no wyzt ne shal nat amenusen it
þat is to seyn to ben maked goddes. ¶ and syn it is
þus þat goode men ne faylen neuer mo of hire medes.
¶ certys no wise man ne may doute of þe vndepartable
peyne of shrewes. ¶ þat is to seyn þat þe peyne of
shrewes ne departip nat from hem self neuer mo.
¶ For so as goode and yuel and peyne and medes ben
contrarie it mot nedes ben þat ryzt as we seen by-tiden
in gerdoun of goode. þat also mot þe peyne of yuel
answere by þe contrarie partye to shrewes. now þan so
as bounte and prowesse ben þe medes to goode folk.
also is shrewednesse it self torment to shrewes ¶ þan
who so þat euer is entecched and defouled wip yuel.
yif shrewes wolen þan preisen hem self may it semen
to hem þat þei ben wip outhen partye of tourment. syn
þei ben swiche þat þe [vtteriste wikkednesse / þat is to
seyn wikkede thewes / which þat is the] outereste and
þe w[or]ste kynde of shrewednesse ne defoulip nat ne
entechip nat hem oonly but infectip and enuenemyp
hem gretely ¶ And al so loke on shrewes þat ben þe

3408 *good[e]*—goode
 wolde—wolde
3409 *goode*—good
 of (2)—of the
3411 *greet*—grote
3413 *here byforne*—her by-
 forne
3415 *god*—good
3414 *is (1)*—his

3414 *clere*—cleer
3415 *good[e]*—goode
3417 *godde[s]*—goddes
 swiche—swich
3418 *[ne]*—from C.
 endirken—derken
3423 *wise man*—wysman
 þe—omitted
 vndepartable—MS. vndir-

partable, C. *vndepart-*
 able
3423 *of (1)*—of the
3428 *answere*—answery
 þe—omitted
3434 *[vtteriste— is the]*—
 from C.
3438 *gretely*—grotly

contrarie partye of goode men. how grete peyne felaw-
shipeþ *and* folweþ hem. ¶ For þou hast lerned a litel
here byform þat al þing þat is *and* haþ beyng is oon.
and pilke same oon is good. þan is þis consequence þat
it semeþ wel. þat al þat is *and* haþ beyng is good. þis
is to seyne. as who seiþ þat beyng *and* vnite *and*
goodnesse is al oon. *and* in þis manere it folweþ þan.
þat al þing þat faileþ to ben good. it styntiþ forto be.
and forto haue any beyng. wher fore it is þat shrewes
stynten forto ben þat þei weren. but pilke oþer forme
of mankynde. þat is to seyne þe forme of þe body wiþ
oute. shewiþ þat þis shrewes were somtyme men.
¶ wher fore whan þei ben peruerted *and* torned in to
malice. certys þan han þei forlorn þe nature of man-
kynde. but so as oonly bounte *and* prowesse may en-
hawne euery man ouer oþer men. þan mot it nedes be
þat shrewes whiche þat shrewednesse haþ cast out of þe
condicioun of mankynde ben put vndir þe merite *and*
þe deserte of men. þan bitidiþ it þat yif þou seest a
wyz þat be transformed in to vices. þou ne mayst nat
wene þat he be a man. ¶ For ȝif he [be] ardaunt in
auarice. *and* þat he be a rauynour by violence of
foreine rychesse. þou shalt seyn þat he is lyke to a
wolf. *and* yif he be felonous *and* wiþ out reste *and*
exercise hys tonge to chidynges. þou shalt lykene hym
to þe hounde. *and* yif he be a preue awaitour yhid *and*
reioyseþ hym to rauysshe by wyles. þou shalt seyne
hym lyke to þe fox whelpes. ¶ And yif he be dis-
tempre *and* quakiþ for ire men shal wene þat he bereþ
þe corage of a lyoun. *and* yif he be dredeful *and* fleyng
and dredeþ þinges þat ne auzten nat ben dred. men

pollutes them.
But contemplate
the punishment
of the wicked.
You have been
taught that
unity is essential
to being and is
good—and all that
3443

have this unity
are good; what-
soever, then, falls
to be good ceases
to exist. So that
it appears that
evil men must
cease to be what
they were. That
they were once
men, the outward
form of the body,
which still re-
mains, clearly
testifies. Where-
fore, when they
degenerate into
wickedness they
3452

lose their human
nature. But as
virtue alone ex-
alts one man
above other men,
it is evident that
vice, which
divests a man of
his nature, must
sink him below
humanity. You
cannot, therefore,
esteem him to be
a man whom you
see thus trans-
formed by his
vices. The greedy
robber, you will
say, is like a wolf.
3461

He who gives no
rest to his abusive
tongue, you may
liken to a howard.
Does he delight
in fraud and trick-
ery? then is he
like young foxes.
Is he intemperate
in his anger?
then men will
compare him to a
raging lion. If he
3468

be a coward, he
will be likened to
3468

3439 *grote*—gret
3441 *al*—alle
 haþ—MS. *habe*
3443 *al*—alle
 haþ—MS. *habe*
3446 *al*—alle
3447 *haue*—han
3448 *stynten*—MS. *styntent*

3450 *were somtyme*—weeren
 whilom
3453 *forlorn*—MS. *forlorne*,
 C. *forlorn*
3453 *as*—omitted
 enhawne—enhawsen
3455 *whiche*—which
 haþ—MS. *habe*

3469 [be]—from C.
3464 *yhid*—MS. *yhidde*, C.
 I-hidd
3465 *seyn*—seyn
3468 *dredeful*—dredful
3469 *ben*—to ben
 dred—MS. *dredde*, C.
 dredd

a hart. If he be slow, dull, and lare, then is he like an *asse*. Is he fickle and inconstant? Then is he like a *bird*. Doth he wallow in filthy lusts? Then doth he roll himself in the mire like a nasty *cow*. It followeth, then, that he who ceases to be virtuous, ceases to be a man; and, since he cannot attain divinity, he is turned into a beast.

shal holde hym lyke to þe herte. *and* yif he be slowe *and* astoned *and* lache. he lyueþ as an *asse*. *and* yif he be lyzt *and* vnstedfast of corage *and* chaungeþ ay his studies. he is lickened to briddes. ¶ *and* yif he be plounged in foule *and* vnclene luxuries. he is wipholden in þe foule delices of þe foule soowe. ¶ þan folweþ it þat he þat forletip bountee *and* prowesse. he forletip to ben a man. syn he ne may nat passe in to þe condicioun of god. he is tourned in to a beest. 3478

[* fol. 27 b.]

* v[E] LA NARICI DUOIS.

[The 3rd Metur.]

Ulysses was driven by the eastern winds upon the shores of that isle where Circe dwelt, who, having entertained her guests with magic draughts, transformed them into divers shapes—one into a boar, another into a lion;

EVIUS þe wynde aryueþ þe sayles of vlixes duc of þe contre of narica. *and* hys wandryng shippes by þe see in to þe isle pere as Circe þe fayre goddessse douzter of þe sonne dwelleþ þat medlyþ to hir newe gestes drynkes þat ben touched *and* maket wip enchauntmentz. *and* after þat hir hande myty of þe herbes had[de] chaunged hir gestes in to dyuerse maneres. þat 3486 oon of hem is couered his face wip forme of a boor. þat oper is chaunged in to a lyoun of þe contre of mar-morike. *and* his nayles *and* his teþe wexen. ¶ þat oper of hem is newliche chaunged in to a wolf. *and* howeliþ whan he wolde wepe. þat oper goþ debonairly in þe house as a tigre of Inde. but al be it so þat þe godhed of mercurie þat is cleped þe bride of arcadie haþ had mercie of þe duc vlixes bysegged wip diuerse yueles *and* haþ vnbounden hym fro þe pestilence of hys oosteresse algates þe rowers *and* þe maryners' hadden by 3496 þis ydrawen in to hir mouþes *and* dronken þe wicked[e]

some into howling wolves, and others into Indian tigers.

But Mercury, the Arcadian god, rescued Ulysses from the Circean charms. Yet his mariners, having drunk of her infected drinks, were changed to swine, and fed on acorns.

3470 holde—holden

lyke—lyk

herte—hert

slowe—slowh

3472 vnstedfast—vnstidefast

his—hise

3476 þan—MS. pat, C. than-

ne

3477 passe—passen

3479 aryueþ—aryuede

vlixes—MS. vlixes, C.

vlixes

3481 Circe—Circes

3483 enchauntmentz—en-

chauntmentz

3484 hande—hand

of—ouer

3486 had[de]—hadde

gestes—MS. goostes, C.

gestes

3488 boor—boers

3489 his (1)—hise

his teþe—hise teth

3489 newliche—neweliche

3490 gob—MS. goþe

3491 howse—hows

3492 bride—bryd

haþ—MS. hape

3493 mercie—MS. mercurie,

C. mercy

3494 haþ—MS. hape

3495 oosteresse—oostesse

3496 wicked[e]—wikkede

drynkes þei þat were woxen swyne haddē by þis
chaunged hire mete of brede forto ete acorns of ookes. 3498

non of hir lymes ne dwelliþ wiþ hem hoole. but þei han lost þe voys *and* þe body. Only hire þouȝt dwelleþ wiþ hem stable þat wepiþ *and* bywailiþ þe monstrous chaungynge þat þei suffren. ¶ O ouer lyzt hand. as who seiþ. ¶ O feble *and* lyzt is þe hand of Circes þe enchaunteresse þat chaungeþ þe bodies of folk in to bestes to regarde *and* to comparisoun of mutacioun þat is makid by vices. ne þe herbes of circes ne ben nat myzty. for al be it so þat þei may chaungen þe lymes of þe body. ¶ algates ȝit þei may nat chaunge þe hertes. for wiþ inne is yhid þe strengþe *and* þe vigour of men in þe secre toure of hire hertys. þat is to seyn þe strengþe of resoun. but pilke uenymys of vices to-drawen a man to hem more myztily þan þe venym of circes. ¶ For vices ben so cruel þat þei percen *and* þoruȝ passen þe corage wiþ inne. *and* þouȝ þei ne anoye nat þe body. ȝitte vices wooden to distroien men by wounde of þouȝt. 3509

All traces of the human form were lost, and they were bereft of speech. Their souls, unchanged, bewailed their dreadful fate.

O most weak, are Circe's powers compared with the potency of vice, to transform the human shape!

Circe's herbs may change the body, but cannot touch the mind, the inward strength of man.

But vice is more potent than Circe's poisonous charms.

Though it leaves the body whole, it pierces the inner man, and inflicts a deadly wound upon the soul.

TUNC EGO FATEOR INQUAM.

þan seiðe I þus I confesse *and* am aknowe quod I. ne I ne se nat þat men may seyn as by ryȝt. þat shrewes ne ben nat chaunged in to beestes by þe qualite of hir soules. ¶ Al be it so þat þei kepen ȝitte þe forme of þe body of mankynde. but I nolde nat of shrewes of whiche þe þouȝt cruel woodeþ alwey in to destruccioun of good[e] men. þat it were leueful to hem to done þat. ¶ Certys quod she ne it nis nat leueful to hem as I shal wel shewen þe in couenable place. ¶ But napeles yif so were þat pilke þat men wenen ben

[The ferteþe prose.]

B. I confess that vicious men are rightly called beasts. They retain the outward form of man, but the qualities of their souls prove them to be beasts. I wish, however, that the wicked were without the power to annoy and hurt good men.

P. They have no power, as I shall presently show you.

3497 were woxen swyne — weeren woxen swyn
3498 chaunged — lchaunged
brede — bred
forto — MS. *and* forto
ete acorns — eten akkornes
3499 hoole — hoool

3501 wepiþ — MS. kepiþ, C. weepith
3502 monstrous — MS. mon-
strous, C. Monstruos
3504 Circes — MS. Cirtes
folk — folkys [I-hydd
3509 yhid — MS. yhidde, C.

3515 wooden — MS. wolden, C. wooden
3517 aknowe — aknowe it
3518 seyn — sayn
3523 good[e] — goode
3524 done — don
3526 ben — be

But were this power, which men ascribe to them, taken away from the wicked, they would be relieved of the greatest part of their punishment. The wicked are more unhappy when they have accomplished their evil designs than when they fail to do so. If it is a miserable thing to will evil, it is a greater unhappiness to have the power to execute it, without which power the wicked desires would languish without effect. Since, then, each of these three things (i. e. the will, the power, and the accomplishment of evil) hath its misery, therefore a threefold wretchedness afflicts those who both will, can, and do commit sin.

3544

B. I grant it—but still I wish the vicious were without this misfortune.

[* fol. 28.]
P. They shall be despoiled of it sooner than you wish perhaps, or than they themselves imagine. In the narrow limits of this life, nothing, however tardy it appears, can seem to an immortal soul to have a very long duration. The great hopes, and the subtle machinations of the wicked, are often suddenly frustrated, by which an end is put to their wickedness. If vice renders

leueful for shrewes were bynomen hem. so þat þei ne myzten nat anoyen or don harme to goode men. ¶ Certys a gret party of þe peyne to shrewes shulde ben allegged and releued. ¶ For al be it so þat þis ne seme nat credible þing perauenture to somme folk zit mot it nedes be þat shrewes ben more wrecches and vnsely. whan þei may don and performe þat þei coueiten [than yif they myhte nat complyssen þat they coueyten]. ¶ For yif so be þat it be wrecchednesse to wilne to don yuel þan is it more wrecchednesse to mowen don yuel. wiþ oute whiche moeuynge þe wrecched wille sholde languisshe wiþ oute effecte. ¶ þan syn þat eueryche of þise þinges haþ hys wrecchednesse. þat is to seyne wil to done yuel. and moeuynge to done yuel. it mot nedes be. þat þei (shrewes) ben constreyned by þre vnselynesses þat wolen and mowen and performen felonyes and shrewednesses. ¶ I accorde me quod I. but I desire gretely þat shrewes losten sone þilke vnselynesses. þat is to seyne þat shrewes were despoyled of moeuynge to don yuel. ¶ so shullen þei quod she. sonnere perauenture þen þou woldest *or sonnere þen þei hem self wenen to lakken mowynge to done yuel. ¶ For þere nis no þing so late in so short boundes of þis lijf þat is longe to abide. namelyche to a corage inmortal. Of whiche shrewes þe grete hope and þe heye compassyngus of shrewednesse is often destroyed by a sodeyne ende or þei ben war. and þat þing establiþ to shrewes þe ende of hir shrewednesse. ¶ For yif þat shrewednesse makiþe wrecches. þan mot he nedes be most wrecched þat lengest is a shrewe. þe whiche wicked shrewes wolde ydemen aldirmost vnsely and

3537 *for—to*
3538 *myzten—myhte*
don—MS. done, C. doon
harme—harm
3539 *gret—MS. grete, C. gret*
3533-36 *don—MS. done, C. doon*
3533-34 [*than—coueyten*]—
from C.
3537 *moeuynge—mowynge*

3537 *wille—wil*
3539 *haþ—MS. haþe*
seyne—seyn
3540 *done* (1)—doon
moeuynge to done—Mow-
yng to don
mot—MS. mote, C. mot
3544 *gretely—gretly*
3545 *seyne—seyn*
were—woeren

3545 *moeuynge—mowynge*
3549 *wenen—wene*
to lakken—yuel—omit-
ted
3549 *þere—the*
so (2)—the
3550 *longe—long*
3553 *shrewednesse—shrew-*
ednesses
often—ofte

caýtifs yif þat hir shrewednes ne were yfinissed. at þe leste weye by þe outerest[e] deep. for [yif] I haue concluded soþe of þe vnseynesse of shrewednesse. þan shewep it clerely þat pilke shrewednesse is wiþ outen ende þe whiche is certeyne to ben perdurable. ¶ Certys quod I þis [conclusion] is harde and wonderful to graunte. ¶ But I knowe wel þat it accordeþ moche to [the] þinges þat I haue graunted her byforne. ¶ þou hast quod she þe ryzt estimacioun of þis. but who so euere wene þat it be an harde þing to acorde hym to a conclusioun. it is ryzt þat he shewe þat somme of þe premisses ben fals. or ellys he mot shewe þat þe colasioun of preposiciouns nis nat spedeful to a necessarie conclusioun. ¶ and yif it be nat so. but þat þe premisses ben ygranted þer nis nat whi he sholde blame þe argument. for þis þing þat I shal telle þe nowe ne shal not seme lasse wondirful. but of þe þinges þat ben taken al so it is necessarie as who so seip it folweþ of þat whiche þat is purposed byform. what is þat quod I. ¶ certys quod she þat is þat þat pise wicked shrewes ben more blysfyl or ellys lasse wrecches. þat byen þe tourmentes þat þei han deserued. þan yif no payne of Iustice ne chastied[e] hem. ne þis ne seye I nat now for þat any man myzt[e] þenk[e] þat þe maneres of shrewes ben coriged and chastised by veniaunce. and þat þei ben brouzt to þe ryzt wey by þe drede of þe tourment. ne for þat þei zeuen to oþer folk ensample to fleyen from vices. ¶ But I vndirstonde zitte [in] an oþer manere þat shrewes ben more vnseily whan þei ne ben nat punissed al be it so þat þere ne ben had no resoun or lawe of correccioun. ne none ensample of lokinge. ¶ And what manere

men wretched, the longer they are vicious the longer must they be miserable. And they would be infinitely wretched if death did not put an end to their crimes. It is clear, as I have already shown, that eternal misery is infinite. B. This consequence appears to be just, but difficult to assent to. F. You think rightly; but if you cannot assent to my conclusion you ought to show that the premises are false, or that the consequences are unfairly deduced; for if the premises be granted, you cannot reject the inferences from them. What I am about to say is not less wonderful, and it follows

3574 necessarily from the same premises. B. What is that? F. That the wicked who have been punished for their crimes, are happier than if justice had allowed them to go unpunished. I do not appeal to popular arguments, that punishment corrects vice, that the fear of chastisement leads them to take the right path, and that the sufferings of evil-doers deter others from vice, but I believe that guilty men, unpunished, become much more unhappy in another way. 3588

3559 shrewednes — shrewed-
ness
yfinissed — fynished
3560 soye — wey
outerest[e] — outteryste
[yif] — from C.
3561 clerely — clerly
3563 [conclusion] — from C.

3563 harde — hard
3564 [the] — from C.
3567 harde — hard
3568 fals — false
3573 nows — now
3575 who so seip — ho seyth
whiche — which
3578 byen — a-byen
3579 chastied[e] — chastysede

3580 myzt[e] — myhte
3581 þenk[e] — think
3584 zeuen — MS. zeuene, C.
yeuen
fleyen — fien
3585 zitte — yif
[in] — from C.
3588 nows — non

B. In what way do you mean?

P. Are not good people happy, and evil folk miserable?

B. Yes.

P. If good be added to the wretchedness of a man, will not he be happier than another whose misery has no element of good in it?

B. It seems so.

P. And if to the same wretched being another misery be annexed, does not he become more wretched than he whose misery is alleviated by the participation of some good?

3602

B. He does.

P. When evil men are punished they have a degree of good annexed to their wretchedness, to wit, the punishment itself, which as it is the effect of justice is good. And when these wretches escape punishment something more of ill (*i.e.* exemption from punishment) is added to their condition.

B. I cannot deny it.

P. Much more unhappy are the wicked when they enjoy an unmerited impunity than when they suffer a lawful chastisement. It is just to punish evil-doers, and unjust that they should escape punishment.

[*fol. 28 b.*]

B. Nobody denies that.

P. Everything, too, which is just

shal þat ben quod I. ouþer þan haþ ben told here byforn ¶ Hauē we nat graunted þan quod she þat good[e] folk ben blysful. and shrewes ben wrecchea. 3is quod I. [thane quod she] 3if þat any good were added to þe wrecchenesse of any wyȝt. nis he nat more blisful þan he þat ne haþ no medelyng of goode in hys solitarie wrecchednesse. so semeþ it quod I. and what seyst þou þan quod she of þilke wrecche þat lakkeþ alle goodes. so þat no goode nis medeled in hys wrecchednesse. and 3itte ouer alle hys wickednesse for whiche he is a wrecche þat þer be 3itte anoþer yuel anxid and knyȝt to hym. shal not men demen hym more vnsely þan þilke wrecche of whiche þe vnselynnesse is re[le]ued by þe participacioun of som goode. whi sholde he nat quod I. ¶ þan certys quod she han shrewes whan þei ben punissed somwhat of good anxid to hir wrecchednesse. þat is to seyne þe same peyne þat þei suffren whiche þat is good by þe resoun of Iustice. And whan þilke same shrewes ascapen wiþ outen tourment. þan han þei somwhat more of yuel 3it ouer þe wickednesse þat þei han don. þat is to seye defaute of peyne. whiche defaute of peyne þou hast graunted is yuel. ¶ For þe desert of felonye I ne may nat denye it quod I. ¶ Moche more þan quod she ben shrewes vnsely whan þei ben wrongfully delyuered fro peyne. þan whan þei beþ punissed by ryȝtful vengeance. but þis is open þing and clere þat it is ryȝt þat shrewes ben punissed. and it is wickednesse and wrong þat þei escapin vnpunissed. ¶ who myȝt[e] denye *þat quod I. but quod she may any man denye. þat al þat is ryȝt nis good. and also þe contrarie. þat alle þat is wrong nis

3599 ouþer—oother

haþ—MS. haþe

ben—be

told—MS. tolde, C. told

3591 good[e]—goode

3592 [thane—she]—from

C.

3594 blisful—wefeful

haþ—MS. haþe

3594-97 goode—good

3598 alle—al

whiche—which

3600 knyȝt—knytte

3601 re[le]ued—releued

3602 goode—good

3605 seyne—seyn

3606 whiche—which

3607 outen—owte

3609 don—MS. done

seye—seyn

3610 whiche—which

3611 desert—deserte

3614 beþ—MS. beþe, C. ben

3615 clere—cler

3617 myȝt[e]—myhte

3618 is ryȝt nis—MS. nis

ryȝt is

3619 alle—al

nis wicked—is wykke

wicked. certys quod I pise pinges ben clere ynouȝ. *and* þat we han concludid a litel here byforne. but I preye þe þat þou telle me yif þou accordest to leten no *tourment* to þe soules aftir þat þe body is dedid by þe deþe. þis [is] to seyn. vndirstondeþ þou ouȝt þat soules han any *tourment* after þe deþe of þe body. ¶ Certis quod she ȝe *and* þat ryȝt greta. of whiche soules quod she I trowe þat somme ben *tourmentid* by asprenesse of peyne. *and* somme soules I trowe be excercised by a purging mekenesse. but my conseil nys nat to determyne of þis peyne. but I haue trauayled and told it hider to. ¶ For þou sholdest knowe þat þe mowyng[e] [.i. myght] of shrewes whiche mowyng[e] þe semeþ to ben. vnworþi nis no mowyng[e]. *and* eke of shrowes of whiche þou pleynedest þat þei ne were nat punissid. þat þou woldest seen þat þei ne weren neuer mo wip outen þe torment of hire wickednesse. *and* of þe licence of mowyng[e] to done yuel. þat þou preidest þat it myȝt[e] sone ben endid. *and* þat þou woldest fayne lerne. þat it ne sholde nat longe endure. *and* þat shrewes ben more vnsely yif þei were of lenger duryng. *and* most vnsely yif þei weren perdurable. *and* after þis I haue shewed þe þat more vnsely ben shrewes whan þei escapen wip oute ryȝtful peyne. þan whan þei ben punissid by ryȝtful uengeaunce. and of þis sentence folweþ it þat þan ben shrewes constreyned atte laste wip most greuous *tourment*. whan men wene þat þei ne ben nat ypunissid. whan I considre þi resouns quod I. I. ne trowe nat þat men seyn any þing more verrelly. *and* yif I tourne aȝeyn to þe studies of men. who is [he] to whom it sholde seme þat [he] ne sholde nat only leuen pise pinges. but eke gladly herkene hem. Certys quod

is good; and, on the contrary, whatsoever is unjust is evil.

B. These are just inferences from our former premises. But is there any punishment for the soul after death of the body?

P. Yes, and great ones too. Some punishments are rigorous and eternal. Others have a corrective and purifying force, and are of finite duration. But this is not to our purpose.

I want you to see that the power of the wicked is in reality nothing; that the wicked never go unpunished; that their licence to do evil is not of long duration, and that the wicked would be more unhappy if it were longer, and infinitely wretched if it were to continue for ever.

After this I showed that evil men are more unhappy, having escaped punishment, than if justly chastised. Wherefore when they are supposed to get off scot-free they suffer most grievously.

B. Your reasoning appears convincing and conclusive. But your arguments are opposed to current opinions, and would hardly command assent, or even a hearing.

3631 *here*—her
3633 *dedid*—endyd
3634 *deþe*—deth
3634 [is]—from C.
3634 *ouȝt*—awht
3635 *deþe*—deth
3636 *greta*—gret
3638 *be*—ben

3639 *determyne*—determenye
3639 *peyne*—paynes
3639 *told*—MS. tolde
3633 [.i. myght]—from C.
3633-34 *whiche*—which
3633 *eko*—ek
3635 *seyn*—seyn
3637 *done*—don

3638 *myȝt[e]*—myhte
3638 *fayne lerne*—fayn lernen
3638 *endure*—dure
3645 *atto*—at the
3645 *laste*—MS. last, C. laste
3647 *resoun*—resoun
3648-50 [he]—from C.
3651 *eko*—ek

P. It is so. For those accustomed to the darkness of error cannot fix their eyes on the light of perspicuous truth, like birds of night which are blinded by the full light of day. They consider only the gratification of their lusts, they think there is happiness in the liberty of doing evil and in exemption from punishment. Do you attend to the eternal law written in your own heart. Conform your mind to what is good, and you will stand in no need of a judge to confer a reward upon you —for you have it already in the enjoyment of the best of things (i.e. virtue). If you indulge in vice, you need no other

3668

chastisement—you have degraded yourself into a lower order of beings. The multitude doth not consider this. What then? Shall we take them as our models who resemble beasts? If a man who had lost his sight, having even forgotten his blindness, should declare that his faculties were all perfect, shall we weakly believe that those who retain their sight are blind? The vulgar will not assent to what I am going to say, though supported by conclusive arguments—to wit, that persons are more unhappy that do wrong

she so it is. but men may nat. for þei han hire eyen so wont to derkenesse of erpely þinges. þat þei may nat liften hem vp to þe lyzt of clere soþefastnes. ¶ But þei ben lyke to briddes of whiche þe nyzt lyztneþ hyre lookyng. and þe day blyndeþ hem. for whan men loken nat þe ordre of þinges but hire lustes and talentz. þei wene þat opir þe leue or þe mowyng to done wickednesse or ellys þe escaping wiþ oute peyne be weleful. but considere þe iugement of þe perdurable lawe. for if þou conferme þi corage to þe beste þinges. þou ne hast no nede to no iuge to ziuen þe pris or meede. for þou hast ioigned þi self to þe most excellent þing. and yif þou haue enclined þi studies to þe wicked þinges. ne seek no foreyn wrekers out of þi self. for þou þi self hast prest þe in to wicked þinges. ryzt as þou myztest loken by dyuerse tymes þe foule erþe and þe heuene. and þat alle opir þinges stynten fro wiþ oute. so þat þou [nere neyther in heuene ne in erthe] ne say[e] no þing more. þan sholde it semen to þe as by only resoun of lokyng. þat þou were in þe sterres. and now in þe erþe. but þe poeple ne lokeþ nat on þise þinges. what þan shal we þan approchen vs to hem þat I haue shewed þat þei ben lyke to þe bestes. (q. d. non) ¶ And what wilt þou seyne of þis ¶ yif þat a man hadde al forlorn hys syzt. and had[de] forzeten þat he euer saw and wende þat no þing ne fayled[e] hym of perfeccioun of mankynde. now we þat myzten sen þe same þing wolde we nat wene þat he were blynde (q. d. sic). ne also ne accordeþ nat þe poeple to þat I shal seyne. þe whiche þing is susteyned by a stronge foundement of resouns. þat is to seyn þat more vnsely ben þei

3653 *derkenesse*—darknesse
3654 *clere soþefastnes*—cleer soþfastnesse
3655 *whiche*—which
3656 *opir*—eyther
3657 *done*—don
3658 *escaping*—schapyng
3659 *to (1)*—of
3660 *foreyn*—foreyne
3661 *prest*—thyrst

3666 *wicked*—wikke
3667 [*nere*—*erthe*]—from C.
3668 *heuene*—C. heuenene
3669 *say[e]*—C. saye
3670 *on*—in
3671 *lyke*—lyk
3672 *q. d.*—MS. quod
3673 *wilt þou seyne*—wiltow seyn
3674 *forlorn*—MS. forlorne,

C. for-lorn
3675 *syzt*—syhte
3676 *had[de]*—hadde
3677 *saw*—MS. sawe, C. sawh
3678 *fayled[e]*—faylede
3679 *sen*—MS. sene, C. sen
3680 *þing*—þinges
3681 *q. d.*—MS. quod
3682 *whiche*—which

pat don wrong to oþer folk. þen þei pat þe wrong
suffren. ¶ I wolde heren þilke *same resouns quod I
¶ Deniest þou quod she pat alle shrewes ne ben worþi
to han tourment. nay quod I. but quod she I am cer-
teyne by many resouns pat shrewes ben vnsely. it ac-
cordeþ quod I. þan [ne] dowtest þou nat quod she pat
þilke folk pat ben worþi of tourment pat þeine ben
wrecches. It accordeþ wel quod I. yif þou were þan
quod she yset a luge or a knower of þinges. wheþer
trowest þou pat men sholde tourment[e] hym pat hap
don þe wronge. or hym pat hap suffred þe wronge. I
ne doute nat quod I. pat I nolde don suffissaunt satis-
faccioun to hym pat had[de] suffred þe wrong by þe
sorwe of hym pat had[de] don þe wronge. ¶ þan
semeþ it quod she pat þe doar of wrong is more wrecche
þan he pat hap suffred þe wrong. pat folweþ wel quod
[I]. þan quod she by þise causes and by oþer causes
pat ben enforced by þe same roate pat filþe or synne by
þe propre nature of it makeþ men wrecches. and it
sheweþ wel pat þe wrong pat men don nis nat þe
wrecchenesse of hym pat receyueþ þe wrong. but þe
wrecchednesse of hym pat dop þe wronge ¶ but certys
quod she þise oratours or aduocat; don al þe contrarie
for þei enforcen hem to commoeue þe iuges to han pite
of hem pat han suffred and resceyued þe þinges pat ben
greuous and aspre. and zitte men sholden more ryzt-
fully han pitee on hem pat don þe greuauces and þe
wronges. þe whiche shrewes it were a more couenable
þing pat þe accusours or aduocat; not wroþe but pitous
and debonaire ladden þe shrewes pat han don wrong to
þe Iugement. ryzt as men leden seke folk to þe leche.
for pat þei sholden seken out þe maladies of synne by

than those who
suffer wrong.
B. [fol. 29.]
I would wil-
lingly hear your
reasons.
P. Do you deny
that every wicked
man deserves
punishment?
B. No, I do not.
P. I am satisfied
that impious men
are in many ways
miserable.
B. They are so.
P. Then those
that deserve
punishment are
miserable.
B. I admit it.
P. If you were a
judge, upon whom
would you inflict
punishment?
upon the wrong-
doer, or upon the
injured?
B. I should not
hesitate to punish
the offender as a
satisfaction to the
sufferer.
P. Then you
would deem the
injuring person
more unhappy
than he who had
been wronged?
B. That follows
naturally.
P. From this
then, and other
reasons of like
nature, it seems
3703
that vice makes
men miserable,
and an injury
done to any man
is the misery of
the doer, and not
of the sufferer.
But our advocates
think different-
ly—they try to ob-
tain pity for those
that have suffered
cruelty and op-
pression; but the
juster pity is
really due to the
oppressors, who
ought, therefore,
to be led to judg-
ment as the sick
are to the phys-
ician, not by
angry but by
merciful and kind
accusers, so that,

3693 *don*—MS. done, C. don
oþer—oother
3698 [ne]—from C.
3691 *yset*—MS. ysette, C.
yset
wheþer—omitted
3692 *tourment(e)*—torment-
3692-3 *hap*—MS. hape [en]

3693 *wronge* (2)—wrong
3695 *had(de)*—hadde
3696 *had(de)*—hadden
wronge—wrong
3697 *doar*—doere
3698 *hap*—MS. hape
3699 [I]—from C.
3700 *ben*—ben of

3700 *roate*—Roote
3703-4 *but—wronge*—omit-
ted
3704 *dop*—MS. doþe
3711 *wroþe*—wroth
3713 *þe*—tho
don—MS. done, C. don
3713 *seke*—syke

by the phisic of chastisement, they may be cured of their vices. I would not have the guilty defrauded by their advocates. Their duty is to accuse, and not to excuse offenders. Were

3720

it permitted the wicked to get a slight view of virtue's beauty, which they have forsaken, and could they be persuaded of the purifying effects of lawful chastisement, they surely would not consider punishment as an evil, but

3727

would willingly give themselves up to justice and refuse the defence of their advocates. The wise hate nobody, only a fool hates good men; and it is as irrational to hate the wicked. Vice is a sickness of the soul, and needs our com-

3734

passion, and not our hate, for the distempers of the soul are more deplorable than those of the body, and have more claims upon our compassion.

3740

[The ferthe
Met. v.]

What frenzy causes man to has' n on his fate, that is, by war or by strife. If death is desired he de-

3745

3715 *tourmentz*—torment
be (2)—omitted
3719 [to] s[e]yn—to seyn
3722 *sawen*—sawh
sholden—sholden
3723 [the]—from C.
3724 *auzten*—owhte

tourmentz. and by þis couenaunt eyþer þe entent of þe defendours or aduocat; sholde fayle *and* cesen in al. or ellys yif þe office of aduocat; wolde bettre profiten to men. it sholde be *tourned* in to þe habit of accusacioun. þat is [to] s[e]yn þei sholden accuse shrewes. *and* nat excuse hem. *and* eke þe shrewes hem self. ȝit it were leueful to hem to seen at any clifte þe vertue þat þei han forleten. *and* sawen þat þei sholde putten adoun þe filþes of hire vices by [the] *tourmentz* of peynes. þei ne auzten nat ryȝt for þe recompensacioun forto geten hem bounte *and* prowess whiche þat þei han lost demen ne holden þat pilke peynes weren *tourmentes* to hem. *and* eke þei wolden refuse þe attendaunce of hir aduocat; *and* taken hem self to hire iuges *and* to hir accusours. for whiche it bytideþ [þat] as to þe wise folk per nis no place ylete to hate. þat is to seyn. þat hate ne hap no place amonges wise men. ¶ For no wyȝt wolde haten gode men. but yif he were ouer moche a fole. ¶ *and* forto haten shrewes it nis no resoun. ¶ For ryȝt so as languissing is maladie of body. ryȝt so ben vices *and* synne maladies of corage. ¶ *and* so as we ne deme nat þat þei þat ben seek of hire body ben worpi to ben hated. but raper worpi of pite. wel more worpi nat to ben hated. but forto ben had in pite ben þei of whiche þe þouȝtes ben constreined by felonous wickednesse. þat is more cruel þan any languissinge of body.

QUID TANTOS IUUAT.

What deliteþ it ȝow to exciten so grete moewynges of hatredes *and* to hasten *and* bisien [the] fatal disposicioun of ȝoure deef wiȝ ȝoure propre handes. þat is to seyn by batailes or [by] kontek. for yif ȝe axen þe

3725-29 *whiche*—which
3729 *bytideþ*—MS. byndeþ,
C. bytidith
[þat]—from C.
3730 *ylete*—I-leten
3731 *hap*—MS. haþe
3732 *wolde*—nyl

3732 *moche*—mochel
3733 *fole*—fool
3736 *seek*—yke
3743 [the]—from C.
3745 [by]—from C.

deep it hastisiþ hym of hys owen wille. ne deep ne
tarieþ nat hys swifte hors. and [the] men þat þe ser-
pent; and þe lyouns. and þe tigre. and þe beere and þe
boore sekan to sleen wiþ her teþe. 3it pilke same men
sekan to sleen eueryche of hem oper wiþ swerde. loo for
her maners ben * diuerse and discordaunt ¶ þei
moeuen vnryztful oostes and cruel batailes. and wilne
to perisse by enterchaungynge of dartes. but þe resoun
of cruelte nis nat ynouȝ ryztful. wilt þou þan zelden a
couenable gerdoun to þe desertes of men ¶ Loue ryzt-
fully goode folk! and haue pite on shrewes. 3756

HINC EGO UIDEO INQUAM. ET CETERA.

þus see I wel quod I. eyþer what blisfulnesse or ellys
what vnselesnesse is estab[li]ssed in þe desertys of
goode men and of shrewes. ¶ but in þis ilke fortune
of poeple I see somewhat of goode. and somewhat of
yuel. for no wise man haþ nat leuer ben exiled pore
and nedy and nameles. þan forto dwellen in hys Citee
and flouren of rychesses. and be redoutable by honoure.
and stronge of power for in þis wise more clerely and
more witnesfully is þe office of wise men ytretid whan
þe blisfulnes and [the] pouste of gouernours is as it
were yshad amonges poeples þat ben neyȝboures and
subgitȝ. syn þat namely prisoun lawe and pise oper
tourmentȝ of lawful peynes ben rapier owed to felonous
Citezeins. for þe whiche felonous Citezeins þo peynes
ben establissed. þan for goode folk. ¶ þan I merueile
me gretly quod I. whi [þat] þe þinges ben so mys en-
trechaunged. þat tourmentȝ of felounes pressen and
confounden goode folk. and shrewes rauyssen medes of

lays not to come.
Why do they who
are exposed to the
assaults of beasts
of prey and
venomous reptiles
seek to slay each
other with the
sword. Lo! their
manners and
opinions do not
accord, wherefore
they engage in
unjust wars, and
fiercely urge on
each other's des-
tiny. But this is
no just reason for
shedding blood.
Wouldst thou re-
ward each as he
deserves? Then
love the good as
they deserve, and
have pity upon
the wicked.

[The fyfthe prose.]

B. I see plainly
the nature of that
felicity which at-
tends the virtues
of the good, and of
the misery that
follows the vices of
the wicked. But
in Fortune I see a
mixture of good
and evil. The
wise man prefers
riches, &c., to

3763
poverty, &c. And
wisdom appears
more illustrious,
when wise men
are governors and
impart their
felicity to their
subjects; and
when imprison-
ment, torture, &c.,
are inflicted only
upon bad citizens.

3770

Why, then,
should things
undergo so un-
natural a change?

Why should the
worthy suffer and
the vicious re-

3746 *hastisiþ*—hastoth
owen *wille*—owne wyl
3747 *[the]*—from C.
3748 *boore*—boor
teþe—teeth
3750 *swerde*—sward
3751 *ker*—hir
3753 *wilne*—wynnen
3753 *enterchaungynge*—en-

trechaungynge
3760 *goode*—good
3761 *hap*—MS. hape
nat—omitted
leuer—leuere
3763 *þan*—MS. þat, C. than
3763 *redoutable*—MS. re-
dentable, C. redowtable
3764 *stronge*—strong

3764 *clerely*—clerly
3766 *[the]*—from C.
3767 *neyȝboures*—neȝhe-
bors
3769 *lawful*—lawful
3771 *goode*—good
3772 *[þat]*—from C.

celve the reward of virtue? I should like to hear the reason of so unjust a distribution. I should not marvel so much if *Chance* were the cause of all this confusion. But I am overwhelmed with astonishment when I reflect, that God the director of all things thus unequally distributes rewards and punishments. What difference is there, then, unless we know the cause, between God's proceedings and the operations of Chance? P. It is not at all surprising that you think you see irregularities, when you are ignorant of that order by which God proceeds. But, forasmuch as God, the good governor, presides over all, rest assured that all things are done rightly and as they ought to be done.

[* MS. *aritari*]

[The fyfthe Metur.]

He who knows not that the Bear is seen near the Pole, nor has observed the path of Boötes, will marvel at their appearance.

The vulgar are alarmed when shadows terrestrial obscure the moon's brightness, causing the stars to be displayed.

3776 *grete*—gret
3776 *to witen*—sorto weten
3778 *trowed[e]*—trowede
alle—al
3779 *weere*—weeren
fortuouse—fortunous
3780 *myne*—myn
3781 *good[e]*—goode
3782 *yuel*—yuels
3783 *hardnesse*—hardnesses

vertue and ben in honours. and in grete estatys. and I desire eke to witen of þe. what semeþ þe to ben þe resoun of þis so wrongful a confusioun ¶ For I wolde wondre wel þe lasse yif I trowed[e] þat alle þise þinges were medeled by fortuouse hap. ¶ But now hepeþ and encreseþ myne astonyenge god governour of þinges. þat so as god ȝeueþ ofte tymes to good[e] men goodes and myrþes. and to shrewes yuel and aspre þinges. and ȝeueþ aȝeynewarde to goode folk hardnesse. and to shrewes [he] graunteþ hem her wille and þat þei desiren. what difference þan may þer be bitwixen þat þat god dop. and þe hap of fortune. yif men ne knowe nat þe cause whi þat [it] is. it nis no merueile quod she pouz þat men wenen þat þer be somewhat folysche and confus whan þe resoun of þe order is vnknowe. ¶ But alle pouz pou ne know nat þe cause of so gret a disposicioun. napeles for as moche as god þe good[e] governour attempereþ and gouerneþ þe world. ne doute þe nat þat alle þinges ne ben doon aryzt. 3793

SI QUIS ARCTURI * SYDERA.

Who so þat ne knowe nat þe sterres of arctour ytourned neye to þe souereyne contre or point. þat is to seyne ytourned neye to þe souereyne pool of þe firmament and woot nat whi þe sterre boetes passeþ or gaderiþ his wey[n]es. and drenchep his late flaumbes in þe see. and whi þat boetes þe sterre vnfoldiþ his ouer swifte arisynges. þan shal he wondren of þe lawe of þe heye eyre. and eke if þat he ne knowe nat why þat þe hornes of þe ful[le] moene waxen pale and infect by þe boundes of þe derke. nyzt ¶ and how þe moene dirk

3784 [he]—from C.
wille—wyl
3785 *difference*—MS. differ-
3786 *dop*—MS. dope [ence]
hap—happe
3787 [it]—from C.
it—ne it
3788 *confus*—confuse
3789 *alle*—al
3791 *good[e]*—goode

3783 *ne*—omitted
3794 *arctour*—MS. aritour
3786 *neye*—neygh
3796 *seyne*—seyn
neye—nygh
3797-99 *boetes*—MS. boeces,
C. boetes
3798 *his* (1)—hise
wey[ne]s—weynes
3802 *ful[le]*—fulle

and confuse discouereþ þe sterres. þat she had[de] ycouered by hir clere visage. þe commune errour moeueþ folk and makip wery hir bacines of bras by pikke strookes. þat is to seyne þat þer is a maner poeple þat hyzt[e] coribandes þat wenen þat whan þe moone is in þe eclips þat it be enchauntid. and þefore forto rescowe þe moone þei betyn hire basines wiþ pikke strokes. ¶ Ne no man ne wondreþ whan þe blastes of þe wynde chorus betyn þe strondes of þe see by quakyng floodes. ne no man ne wondreþ whan þe weyhte of þe snowe yhardid by þe colde. is resolved by þe brennyng hete of phebus þe sonne. ¶ For here seen men redyly þe causes. but þe * causes yhid þat is to seye in heuene trouble þe brestes of men. ¶ þe moeueable poeple is a-stoned of alle þinges þat comen selde and sodeynely in oure age. but yif þe troublly errour of oure ignorance departid[e] from vs. so þat we wisten þe causes whi þat swiche þinges bitiden. certys þei sholden cesse to seme wondres.

Thinking the eclipse the result of enchantment, they sought to destroy the charms by the tinkling of brazen vessels or cymbals. Yet none marvel when the north-west wind renders the sea tempestuous; nor when vast heaps of congealed snow are melted by the warm rays of the sun, because the causes are apparent.

3813

Things whose causes are unknown disquiet the human mind.

[* fol. 30.]

The fickle mob stands amazed at every rare or sudden phenomenon. Fear and wonder, however, soon cease when ignorance gives place to certain knowledge.

3822

ITA EST INQUAM.

þvs is it quod I. but so as þou hast zeuen or byhyzt me to vnwrappen þe hidde causes of þinges ¶ and to discoueren me þe resouns couered with dirknesses I preye þe þat þou diuise and Iuge me of pis matere. and þat þou do me to vndrestonden it. ¶ For pis miracle or pis wondre troubleþ me ryzt gretely. and þan she a litel [what] smylyng seide. ¶ þou clepest me quod she to telle þing. þat is grettest of alle þinges þat mowen ben axed. ¶ And to þe whiche questioun vnneþ[e]s is þere auzt ynow to lauen it. as who seip. vnneþes is þer suffisauntly any þing to answere pertily to þi questioun.

[The syxte prose.]
B. So it is. But as thou hast promised to unfold the hidden causes of things, and unveil things wrapt up in darkness: I pray thee deliver me from my present perplexity, and explain the mystery I mentioned to you.
P. You ask me to declare to you the most intricate of all questions, which I am afraid can scarce be answered.

3833

3804 had[de]—hadde
3806 bacines—MS. batines
pikke—MS. pike, C. thilke
3807 seyne—seyn
3808 hyzt[e]—hihte
3809 eclipse—eclipse
3812 chorus—MS. thorus, C. chorus
3813 snowe—sonwh = snowh

3815 here—her
redyly—redely
3816 yhid—MS. yhidde, C. I-hid
seye—seyn
3817 trouble—trowblen
3820 departid[e] from—departide fro
3823 byhyzt—by-hyhte

3824 hidde—hyd
3826 preye—preey
diuise—deuysse
3827 do—don
3828 gretely—gretly
3829 what—from C.
3833 þere auzt—ther awht

For the subject is of such a kind, that when one doubt is removed, innumerable others, like the heads of the hydra, spring up. Nor would there be any end of them unless they were restrained by a quick and vigorous effort of the mind. The question whereof you want a solution embraces the five following points: 1. Simplicity, or unity of Providence. 2. The order and course of Destiny. 3. Sudden chance. 4. Presence of God, and divine predestination. 5. Free-will. I will try to treat of these things:—
Resuming her discourse as from a new principle,

3849

Philosophy argued as follows:—
The generation of all things, every progression of things liable to change, and everything that moveth, derive their causes, order, and form from the immutability of the divine understanding. Providence directs all things by a variety of means. These means, referred only to the divine intelligence, are called Providence; but when contemplated in relation to the things which receive motion and order from them, are called Destiny. Reflection on the efficacy of the one and the other will soon

¶ For þe matere of it is swiche þat whan oon doute is determined *and* kut away þer wexen oþer doutes wiþouten noumbre. ryzt as þe heuedes waxen of ydre þe serpent þat hercules slouȝ. ¶ Ne þere ne were no manere ne noon ende. but yif þat a wyȝt constrained[e] þo doutes. by a ryzt lyuely *and* a quik fire of þouȝt. þat is to seyn by vigour *and* strengþe of witte. ¶ For in þis matere men weren wont to maken questiouns of þe simplicitie of þe purueaunce of god *and* of þe ordre of destine. *and* of sodeyne hap. *and* of þe knowyng *and* predestinacioun deuine *and* of þe lyberte of fre wille. þe whiche þing þou þi self aperceiust wel of what weyȝt þei ben. but for as mochel as þe knowyng of þise þinges is a manere porcioun to þe medicine to þe. al be it so þat I haue lytel tyme to don it. ȝit napeles I wole enforcen me to shewe somewhat of it. ¶ but al þouȝ þe norissinges of dite of musike deliteþ þe þow most suffren. *and* forberen a litel of pilk delite while þat I weue (contexto) to þe resouns yknyt by ordre ¶ As it likeþ to þe quod I so do. ¶ þo spak she ryzt a[s] by an oþer bygynnyn[ge] *and* seide þus. ¶ þe engendryng of alle þinges quod she *and* alle þe progressiouns of muable nature. *and* alle þat moeueþ in any manere takip hys causes. hys ordre. *and* hys formes. of þe stablenesse of þe deuyne þouȝt [*and* thilke deuyne thowht] þat is yset *and* put in þe toure. þat is to seyne in þe heyȝt of þe simplicitie of god. stablisip many manere gyses to þinges þat ben to don. ¶ þe whiche manere whan þat men loken it in pilke pure clerenesse of þe deuyne intelligence. it is ycleped purueaunce ¶ but whan pilke manere is re-

3834 *swiche*—swych

oon—o

3835 *wiþouten noumbre*—

wiþ-owto noumbyr

3836 *waxen*—wexen3837 *þere*—ther3838 *constrained[e]*—con-

stroynede

3839 *lyuely*—lyfly3840 *witte*—wit3843 *hap*—happe3845 *weyȝt*—wyht3848 *wole*—wol3850 *þow*—MS. now. C. þou*most suffren*—MS. moste

to souereyne; C. most

suffren

3851 *pilk*—thilke3853 *þo*—so*spak*—MS. spake, C. spak3853 *a[s]*—as3856 *alle*—al3858 [*and*—*thowht*]—from

C.

yset—MS. ysette, C. yset3859 *toure*—towr*seyne*—seyu*heyȝt*—heyhte3861 *don*—done3863 *clerenesse*—klenness

ferred by men to pinges þat it moeueþ *and* dispoeneþ þan of olde men. it was cleped destine. ¶ þe whiche pinges yif þat any wyzt lokeþ wel in his pouzt. þe strengþe of þat oon *and* of þat oþer he shal lyztly mowen seen þat þise two pinges ben diuers. ¶ For purueaunce is pilke deuyne resoun þat is establissed in þe souereyne prince of pinges. þe whiche purueaunce disponiþ alle pinges. but destine is þe disposicioun *and* ordenaunce cleuyng to moeuable pinges. by þe whiche disposicioun þe purueaunce knyteþ alle pinges in hire ordres. ¶ For purueaunce embraceþ alle pinges to hepe. al pouz þat þei ben dyuerse *and* al pouz þei ben wiþ outhen fyn. but destynie departeþ *and* ordeyneþ alle pinges singlerly *and* diuideþ. in moeuynges. in places. in formes. in tymes. departiþ [as] þus. so þat þe vnfolding of temporel ordenaunce assembled *and* ooned in þe lokyng of þe deuyne pouzt ¶ Is purueaunce *and* pilke same assemblynge. *and* oonyng diuided *and* vnfolden by tymes. lat þat ben called destine. *and* al be * it so þat þise pinges ben dyuerse. zitte napeles hangeþ þat oon on þat oþer. forwhi þe ordre destinal procediþ of þe simplicitie of purueaunce. for ryzt as a werkman þat aperceiueþ in hys pouzt þe forme of þe þing þat he wil make moeueþ þe effect of þe werke. *and* lediþ þat he had[de] loked byforne in hys pouzt symply *and* presently by temporel pouzt. ¶ Certys ryzt so god disponiþ in hys purueaunce singlerly *and* stably þe pinges þat ben to done. but he amynistreþ in many maneres *and* in dyuerse tymes by destyne. pilke same pinges þat he haþ disponed þan whepir þat destine be exercised. eyþer by somme dyuyne spirites seruantez to þe deuyne purueaunce. or ellys by somme soule (anima

cause us to see their differences. Providence is the divine intelligence manifested in the disposition of worldly affairs. Destiny or Fate is that inherent state or condition of movable things by means whereof Providence retains them in the order in which she has placed them. Providence embraces all things, although diverse and infinite; but Fate gives motion to every individual thing, and in the place and under the form appropriated to it. So that the explication of this order of things wrap up in the divine intelligence is Providence; and being unfolded according to time and other circum-

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stances, may be called Fate.

Though these [* fol. 30 b.] things appear to differ, yet one of them depends on the other, for the order of Fate proceeds from the unity of Providence. For as a workman, who has formed in his head the plan of a work which he is desirous to finish, executes it afterwards, and produces after a time all the different parts of the model which he has conceived; so God in the plan of his Providence disposes everything to be brought about in a certain order and in a proper time; and afterwards, by the ministry of Fate,

3873 *cleuyngs*—*cluyngs*
3876 *wip outhen fyn*—*Infy-nyte*
3876 *singlerly*—*syngulerly*
3877 in (3)—*MS. and, C. in*
3878 *departiþ*—*omitted*
[as]—*from C.*

3878 *so þat*—*lat*
3881 *on*—*of*
3886 *wil*—*wol*
3888 *had[de]*—*hadde*
symply—*symplely*
3889 *pouzt*—*ordinaunce*
3890 *singlerly*—*syngulerly*

3890 *stably*—*stablye*
3893 *hap*—*MS. hape*
3894 *eyþer*—*owther*
seruantez—*MS. seru-
auncez*
3896 *somme*—*som*

he accomplishes what he has planned, conformably to that order and that time. So then, however Fate be exercised, it is evident that things subject to Destiny are under the control of Providence, which disposes Destiny. But some things under Providence are exempt from the control of Fate; being stably fixed near to the Divinity himself, and beyond the movement of Destiny. For even, as among several circles revolving round one common centre, that which is innermost approaches nearest to the simplicity of the middle point, and is, as it were, a centre, round which the outward ones revolve; whilst the

3912

outermost, revolving in a wider circumference, the further it is from the centre describes a larger space—but yet, if this circle or anything else be joined to the middle point, it is constrained to be immovable. By parity of reason, the further anything is removed from the first intelligence, so much the more is it under the control of Destiny; and the nearer anything approaches to this intelligence, the centre of all things, the more stable it becomes, and the less dependent upon Destiny.

mundi). or ellys by al nature seruyng to god. or ellys by þe celestial moeuynge of sterres. or ellys by þe vertue of aungels. or ellys by þe dyuerse subtilite of deueles. or ellys by any of hem. or ellys by hem alle þe destynal ordynaunce is ywouen or accomplissed. certys it is open ping þat þe purueaunce is an vnmoeueable and symple forme of pinges to done. and þe moeueable bonde and þe temporel ordynaunce of pinges whiche þat þe deuyne simplicitie of purueaunce haþ ordeyned to done. þat is destine. For whiche it is þat alle pinges þat ben put vndir destine ben certys subgitz to purueaunce. to whiche purueaunce destine it self is subgit and vndir.

¶ But somme pinges ben put vndir purueaunce þat sourmouten þe ordinaunce of destine. and þo ben pilke þat stably ben yficched ney to þe first godhed þei sourmouten þe ordre of destinal moeuablite. ¶ For ryzt as cercles þat tournen aboute a same Centre or about a poynt. pilke cercle þat is inrest or moost wipynne ioineþ to þe symplesse of þe myddel and is as it were a Centre or a poynt to þat oper cercles þat tournen abouten hym. ¶ and pilke þat is outerest compased by larger envyronnyng is vnfolden by larger spaces in so mochel as it is forþest fro þe mydel symplitie of þe poynt. and yif þer be any ping þat knytteþ and felawshippeþ hym selfe to pilke mydel poynt it is constreyned in to symplitie. þat is to seyn in to [vn]moeueablete. and it ceseth to ben shad and to fletin dyuersly. ¶ Ryzt so by semblable resoun. pilke ping þat departiþ firþest fro þe first pouzt of god. it is vnfolden and summittid to grettere bondes of destine. and in so moche is þe ping more free and lovs fro destyne as it axeþ and

3906 *al*—alle
3907 *moeuynge*—moeuynge
3900 *ywouen*—MS. ywounen.
C. ywouen
or—and
3902 *bonde*—bond
3914 *haþ*—MS. haþe
3906 *whiche*—which

3912 *as*—as of
3913 *about*—a-bowte
inrest—innerest
3917 *larger* (1)—a large
3918 *mochel*—moche
forþest—ferthere
3920 *selfe*—self
3921 [vn]moeueablete—vn-

moeueablete
3922 *ceseth*—MS. seþe, C.
cesith
3923 *pinge*—thing
3924 *of*—MS. to, C. of
3926 *lovs*—laus

holdeþ hym ner to pilke Centre of pinges. þat is to
seyne god. ¶ And if þe ping cleueþ to þe stedfastnesse
of þe pouzt of god. *and* he wiþ oute moeuynge certys it
sourmounteþ þe necessite of destyne. þan ryȝt swiche
comparisoun as [it] is of skilynge to vndirstondyng *and*
of ping þat is engendred to ping þat is. *and* of tyme to
eternite. *and* of þe cercle to þe Centre. ryȝt so is þe
ordre of moeueable destine to þe stable symplicitie of
purueaunce. ¶ pilke ordinaunce moeueþ þe heuene
and þe sterres *and* attenteþ þe elymenȝ to gider
amonges hem self. *and* transformeþ hem by enter-
chaungable mutacioun. ¶ *and* pilke same ordre neweþ
aȝein alle pinges growyng *and* fallyng a-doune by sem-
bleables progressiouns of seedes *and* of sexes. þat is
to sein. male *and* female. *and* þis ilke ordre constreyneth
þe fortunes *and* þe dedes of men by a bonde of causes
nat able to ben vnbounden (indissolubili). þe whiche
destinal causes whanne þei passen oute fro þe by-
gynnynges of þe vnmoeueable purueaunce it mot nedes
be þat þei ne be nat mutable. *and* þus ben þe pinges ful
wel ygouerned. yif þat þe symplicitie dwellynge* in þe
deuynne pouzt sheweþ furþe þe ordre of causes. vnable to
be I-bowed. *and* þis ordre constreyneth by hys propre
stablete þe moeueable pinges. or ellys þei sholde fleten
folily for whiche it is þat alle pinges semen to be confus
and trouble to vs men. for we ne mowe nat considere
pilke ordinaunce. ¶ Napeles þe propre manere of
euery ping dressyng hem to goode disponit hem alle.
for þere nis no ping don for cause of yuel. ne pilke
ping þat is don by wicked[e] folk nis nat don for yuel
þe whiche shrewes as I haue shewed [ful] plentiuously

And if we suppose that the thing in question is joined to the stability of the supreme mind, it then becomes immovable, and is beyond the necessity and power of destiny. As reasoning is to the understanding, as that which is produced to that which exists of itself, as time to eternity, as the circle to the centre, so is the movable order of Fate to the stable simplicity of Providence. Destiny rules nature. It controls the actions of men by an indissoluble chain of causes, and is, like their

3941 origin, immutable. Thus, then, are all things well conducted, since that invariable order of cause has its origin in the simplicity of the Divine mind, and by its inherent immutability ex-

[* fol. 31.] exercises a restraint upon mutable things, and preserves them from irregularity. To those who understand not this order, things appear confused—nevertheless, the proper condition of all things directs and inclines it to their true good. For there is nothing done for the sake of evil, not even by the wicked, who, in seeking for felicity, are led astray by crooked error.

3927 *ner*—*ners*
3929 *seyne*—*seyn*
pinge cleueþ — thing
clyueth
stedfastnesse — *stȝdefast-*
nesse
3930 *swiche*—*swych*
3931 [*it*]*—*from C.
3933 *to* (2)—MS. of, C. to

3937 *enterchaungable*—MS.
enterchaungyngable, C.
entrechaungeable
3939 *a-doune*—*a-down*
sembleables—*semblable*
3942 *bonde*—*bond*
3943 *ben vnbounden*—*be vn-*
bounde
3944 *oute*—*owt*

3945 *furþe*—*forth*
3949 *I-bowed*—MS. vnbound-
en, C. I-bowed
3950 *sholde*—*sholden*
3951 *whiche*—*which*
3952 *mowe*—*mowen*
3956 *wicked[e]*—*wȝkȝede*
3957 [*ful*]*—*from C.

But the order proceeding from the centre of supreme goodness does not mislead any. But you may say, what greater confusion can there be than that both prosperous and adverse things should at times happen to good men, and that evil men should at one time enjoy their desires and at another be tormented by hateful things. Are men wise enough to discover, whether those whom they believe to be virtuous or wicked, are so in reality? Opinions differ as to this matter. Some who are deemed worthy of reward by one person, are deemed unworthy by another. But, suppose it were possible for one to distinguish

with certainty between the good and the bad? Then he must have as accurate a knowledge of the mind as one has of the body. It is miraculous to him who knows it not, why sweet things are agreeable to some bodies, and bitter to others; why some sick persons are relieved by lenitives and others by sharper remedies. It is no marvel to the leech, who knows the causes of disease, and their cures. What constitutes the health of the mind, but goodness? And what are its maladies, but vice? Who is the preserver of good,

3958-9 *goode*—good
3960 *declinēþ*—MS. enclineþ,
C. declynyth
3961 *woore*—worse
3962 *somme tyme*—somytyme
3965 *swiche*—swych
3967 *goode*—good

seken goode. but wicked errour mystournip hem. ¶ Ne þe ordre comynge fro þe poynt of souereyne goode ne declineþ nat fro hys bygynnyng. but þou mayst sein what vnreste may ben a wors confusioun þan þat goode men han somme tyme aduersite. and somtyme prosperite. ¶ and shrewes also han now þinges þat þei desiren. and now þinges þat þei haten ¶ wheper men lyuen now in swiche hoolnesse of þouȝt. as who seip. ben men now so wise. þat swiche folk as þei demen to ben goode folk or shrewes þat it mot nedes ben þat folk ben swiche as þei wenen. but in þis manere þe domes of men discorden. þat pilke men þat somme folk demen worpi of mede. oþer folk demen hem worpi of tourment. but lat vs graunt[e] I pose þat som man may wel demen or knowen þe goode folk and þe badde. May he þan knowen and seen pilke inrest attemperaunce of corages. as it haþ ben wont to be said of bodyes. as who saip may a man speken and determine of attemperaunce in corages. as men were wont to demen or spoken of complexiouns and attemperaunces of bodies (q' non). ne it [ne] is nat an vnyke miracle to hem þat ne knowen it nat. ¶ As who seip. but is lyke a merueil or a miracle to hem þat ne knowen it nat. whi þat swete þinges [ben] couenable to some bodies þat ben hool and to some bodies bittre þinges ben couenable. and also whi þat some seke folk ben holpen with lyȝt medicines [and some folk ben holpen with sharppe medicynes] but napeles þe leche þat knoweþ þe manere and þe attemperaunce of heele and of maladie ne merueilleþ of it no þing. but what oþer þing semeþ hele of corages but bounte and prowesse. and what oþer þing semeþ maladie of corages but vices. who is ellys kepere of good or

3967 *mot*—moste
3971 *graunt[e]*—graunte
3973 *inrest*—Inneryste
3974 *haþ*—MS. haþe
said—MS. saide, C. seyd
3975 *determine*—determinen
3976 [ne]—from C.

3978 *onlyke*—vn-lyk
3979 *lyke*—lik
3981 [ben]—from C.
hool—hoole
3984 [and—medicynes]—
from C.

dryuere away of yuel but god *gouvernour and* leecher of pouztes. þe whiche god whan he haþ by-holden from þe heye toure of hys *purueaunce* he knoweþ what is couenable to euery wyzt. *and* leneþ hem þat he wot [þat] is couenable to hem. Loo here of comeþ *and* here of is don þis noble miracle of þe ordre *destinal*. whan god þat alle knoweþ doþ swiche þing. of whiche þing [þat] *vknowyng* folk ben astoned but forto *constreine* as who seiþ ¶ But forto *comprehende and* telle a fewe pinges of þe deuyne depnesse þe whiche þat mans resowu may vnderstonde. ¶ þilk man þat þou wenest to ben ryzt *Iuste and* ryzt kepyng of equite. þe contrarie of þat semeþ to þe deuyne *purueaunce* þat al woot. ¶ And lucan my familier telleþ þat þe victories cause liked[e] to þe goddes *and* causes ouercomen liked[e] to catoun. þan what so euer þou mayst seen þat is don in þis [world] vnhoped or vnwened. certys it is þe ryzt[e] ordre of pinges. but as to þi wicked[e] oppinioun it is a *confusioun*. but I suppose þat som man be so wel yþewed. þat þe deuyne Iugement *and* þe Iugement of mankynde accorden hem to gidre of hym. but he is so vnstedfast of corage [þat] yif any aduersite come to hym he wolde for-leten *perauenture* to continue innocence by þe whiche he ne may nat wipholden fortune. ¶ þan þe wise dispensacioun of god spareþ hym þe whiche manere aduersite *myzt[e] enpeyren. ¶ For þat god wil nat suffren hym to trauaile. to whom þat trauayl nis nat couenable. ¶ An oper man is perfit in alle uertues. *and* is an holy man *and* neye to god so þat þe *purueaunce* of god wolde demen þat it were a felony þat he were touched wip any aduersites. so þat he ne

or the driver away of evil, but God, the physician of souls, who knows what is necessary for men, and bestows it upon them? From this source spring that great marvel—the order of destiny—wrought by the wisdom of God, and marvelled at by ignorant men. But, now let us notice a few things concerning the depth of the Divine knowledge which human reason may comprehend. The man you deem just, may appear otherwise to the omniscient eye of Providence. When you see apparent irregularities—unexpected and un-

4004 wished for—deem them to be rightly done. Let us suppose a man so well behaved, as to be approved of God and man—but not endowed with firmness of mind, so that the reverse of fortune will cause him to forgo his probity, since with it he cannot retain his prosperity. A wise Providence, knowing that adversity might destroy this man's integrity, averts from him that

(* fol. 31 b.) adversity which he is not able to sustain. Another man is thoroughly virtuous, and approaches to the purity of the deity—him Providence deems it an injustice to oppress by adversity, and therefore exempts

3991 *hap*—MS. hape
3993 *wot*—MS. wote, C. wot
3994 [þat]—from C.
3995 *don*—MS. done, C. don
3996 *miracle*—MS. mirache, C. miracle
ordre—MS. ordre of
3996 *a le*—al
dop—MS. dope

3996 *whiche*—which
3997 [þat]—from C.
3999 *mans*—mannes
4000 *þilk*—thilke
4004 *liked[e]* (both)—lykede
4005 *is don*—MS. is to don
4006 [world]—from C.
ryzt[e]—ryhte
4007 *wicked[e]*—wykkede

4010 *vnstedfast*—vnstydefast
4011 [þat]—from C.
wolde—wol
4015 *manere*—man
myzt[e]—myhte
4016 *wil*—wol
4018 *neye*—negh

him even from bodily disease. Providence often gives the direction of public affairs to good men, in order to curb and restrain the malice of the wicked. To some is given a mixture of good and evil, according to what is most suitable to the dispositions of their minds. Upon some are laid moderate afflictions, lest they wax proud by too long a course of prosperity. Others suffer great adversities that their virtues may be exercised, and strengthened by the practice of patience. Some fear to be afflicted with what they are able to endure. Others despise

4036

what they are unable to bear; and God punishes them with calamities, to make them sensible of their presumption. Many have purchased a great name by a glorious death. Others by their unshaken fortitude, have shown that virtue cannot be overcome by adversity. These things are done justly, and in order, and are for the good of those to whom they happen. From the same cause it happens, that sometimes adversity and sometimes prosperity falls to the lot of the wicked. None are surprised to see bad men afflicted—they get

wil nat suffre þat swiche a man be moeued wip any manere maladie. ¶ But so as seide a philosopre [the moore excellent by me]. þe aduersites comen nat (he seide in grec!) þere þat uertues han edified þe bodie of þe holy man. and ofte tyme it bitideþ þat þe somme of þinges þat ben to don is taken to good folk to gouerne. for þat þe malice habundaunt of shrewes sholde ben abatid. and god zeueþ and departiþ to oper folk prosp[er]ites and aduersites ymedeled to hepe aftir þe qualite of hire corages and remordip som folk by aduersites. for þei ne sholden nat wexen proude by longe welefulnesse. and oper folk he suffreþ to ben trauayled wip harde þinges. ¶ For þat þei sholden conferme þe vertues of corage by þe vsage and exercitacioun of pacience. and oper folke dreden more þen þei auzten þe wiche þei myzt[en] wel beren. and pilke folk god ledip in to experience of hem self by aspre and sorweful þinges. ¶ And many oper folk han bouzt honorable renoune of þis worlde by þe pris of glorious deep. and som men þat ne mowen nat ben ouer-comen by tourment han zeuen ensample to oper folk þat vertue ne may nat be ouer-comen by aduersites. ¶ and of alle pise þinges þer nis no doute þat þei ne ben don ryztfully and ordeinly to þe profit of hem to whom we seen pise þinges bitide. ¶ For certys þat aduersite comeþ some tyme to shrewes. and some tyme þat þei desiren it comeþ of pise forseide causes and of sorweful þinges þat bytyden to shrewes. Certys no man ne wondrep. For alle men wenen þat þei han wel deserued it. and þei ben of wicked merite of whiche

4021 wil—wol
4022 swiche—swyoh
4023 manere—bodyly
4023-3 [the—me]—from C.
4023 þe aduersites — nat
—omitted
4024 þere—omitted
4026 don—done
to (2)—MS. so
to good — gouerne — to
gouerne to goode folk

4028 oper—oother
4030 som—some
4031 sholden—sholde
4033 conferme—confermen
4034 corage—corages
4036 myzt[en]—mylten
4037 hem—hym
4038 sorweful—sorwful
4038 oper—oother
4039 worlde—world
of (2)—of the

4041 oper—oother
4046 comeþ—comth
some (both)—som
þat þei—MS. þei þat, C.
þat that they
4047 comeþ—comth
sorweful—sorwful
4050 wicked—wykkede
merite — MS. uerite, C.
meryte

shrewes þe tourment som tyme agastep oper to done folies. *and* som tyme it amendeþ hem þat suffren þe tourmentis. ¶ *And* þe prosperite þat is zeuen to shrewes shewep a grete argument to good[e] folk what þing þei sholde demen of pilk wilfulnesse þe whiche prosperite men seen ofte serue to shrewes. in þe whiche þing I trowe þat god dispensiþ. for perauenture þe nature of som man is so ouerþrowyng to yuel *and* so vncouenable þat þe nedy pouerte of hys house-hold myzt[e] raper egren hym to done felonies. and to þe maladie of hym god puttiþ remedie to ziuen hym rychesse. *and* som oper man byholdiþ hys conscience defouled wip synnes *and* makip comparisoun of his fortune *and* of hym self ¶ *and* dredip perauenture þat hys blisfulnesse of whiche þe vsage is ioyful to hym þat þe lesynge of pilke blisfulnesse ne be nat sorweful to hym. *and* þefore he wol chaunge hys maneres. and for he dredip to lese hys fortune. he forletip hys wickednesse. to oper folk is welefulnesse yzeuen vnworþily þe whiche ouerþrowep hem in to destruccioun þat þei han deserued. and to som oper folk is zeuen power to punissen. for þat it shal be cause of continuacioun *and* exercisinge to good[e] folk. *and* cause of tourment to shrewes. ¶ For so as þer nis none alyauce bytwixe good[e] folke *and* shrewes. ne shrewes ne mowen nat accorden amonges hem self *and* whi nat. for shrewes discorden of hem self by her vices þe whiche vices al to renden her consciences. *and* don oft[e] tyme þinges þe whiche þinges whan þei han don hem. þei demen þat þo þinges ne sholde nat han ben don. for whiche þinge pilke souereyne purueaunce haþ maked oft[e] tyme

what they deserve. Their punishment, too, may cause amendment, or deter others from like vices. When the wicked enjoy felicity—the good should learn how little these external advantages are to be prized, which may fall to the lot of the most worthless. Another reason for dispensing worldly bliss to the wicked is, that indigence would prompt naturally violent and rapacious minds to commit the greatest enormities. Their disease God cures by the medicine of money. Some men will cease to do wrong for fear, lest their wealth be lost

4066 through their crimes. Upon others unmerited happiness is conferred, which at last precipitates them into deserved destruction. To some there is given the power of chastisement, in order both to exercise the virtues of the good and to punish the wicked. For as there is no alliance between good and bad, so neither can the vicious agree together. And how should they? Their vices make them at war with themselves, rending and tearing their consciences, and there is scarce anything they do, but what afterwards they disap-

4061 oper—oother
done—don
4063 folies—felonies
4064 grete—gret
good[e]—goode
4065 sholde—sholden
pilk—thilke
4066 serue—seruen
whiche—which
4067 dispensiþ—MS. diapi-

þ, C. dispensith
4069 myzt[e]—myhte
4080 done—don
4081 rychesse—Rychesses
4085 whiche—which
4088 MS. wrongly inserts
welefulnesse after wick-
ednesse
4088-71 oper—oother
4073 good[e]—goode

4074 none—non
4075 good[e]—goode
4078 accorden—acordy
4078 don—MS. done, C. don
oft[e]—ofte
4079 don—MS. done, C. don
4080 sholde—sholden
whiche þinge—whiche thing
4081 haþ—MS. haþe
oft[e]—ofte

prove of. Hence arises a signal miracle brought about by Providence—that evil men have often made wicked men good. For these latter having suffered injuries from the former, have become virtu-

ous, in order that they might not resemble those whom they so detested. It is only the Divine power that can turn evil to good, overruling it for his own purposes. Nothing occurs by the caprice of chance in the realms of Divine Providence. Since God is the governor of all things, it is not lawful to man to attempt to comprehend the whole of the Divine economy, or to explain it in words. Let it suffice to know that God orders all things for the best.

And while he retains things created after his own likeness conformably to his goodness, he banishes evil by the cause of destiny out of his empire. So that those evils which you seem to see are only imaginary. But you are exhausted and weary with the prolixity of my reasoning, and look for relief from the harmony of my verses.

[faire] miracle so þat shrewes han makēd oftyme shrewes to ben good[e] men. for whan þat som shrewes * seen þat þei suffren wrongfully felonies of oper shrewes þei wexen eschaufed in to hat[e] of hem þat aneien hem. and retournen to þe fruit of uertue. when þei studien to ben vnlyke to hem þat þei han hated.

4088 ¶ Certys þis only is þe deuyne myȝt to þe whiche myȝt yueles ben þan good. whan it vsep þo yueles couenably and drawep out þe effect of any good. as who seiþ þat yuel is good oonly by þe myȝt of god. for þe myȝt of god ordeyneþ þilk yuel to good. For oon ordre enbrasip alle þinges. so þat what wyȝt [þat] departip fro þe resoun of þe ordre whiche þat is assigned to hym. algates ȝit he slideþ in to an oper ordre. so þat noþing nis leueful to folye in þe realme of þe deuyne purueaunce. as who seiþ no þing nis wiþouten ordinaunce in þe realme of þe deuyne purueaunce. ¶ Syn þat þe ryȝt strong[e] god governip alle þinges in þis worlde for it nis nat leueful to no man to comprehendē by witte ne vnfolden by worde alle þe subtil ordinaunces and disposiciouns of þe deuyne entent. for oonly it auȝt[e] suffice to han loked þat god hym self makere of alle natures ordeynip and dressip alle þinges to good. while þat he hastip to wiþhalden þe þinges þat he haþ makēd in to hys semblaunce. þat is to seyn forto wiþholden þinges in to good. for he hym self is good he chaseþ oute al yuel of þe boundes of hys communalite by þe ordre of necessite destinable. For whiche it folweþ þat yif þou loke þe purueaunce ordeynynge þe þinges þat men wenen ben haboundaunt in erþes. þou ne shalt not seen in no place no þing of yuel. ¶ but I se now þat

4082 [faire]—from C.
oftyme—omitted
4083 good[e]—goode
4085 hat[e]—hate
aneien—anoyeden
4087 studien—omitted
vnlyke—vnlyk
4088-90 good—goode
4092 þilk—thilke

4083 [þat]—from C.
4084 þe (2)—thilke
whiche—which
4086 realme—Reame
4088 strong[e]—stronge
worlde—world
4100 no—omitted
witte—wit
4101 worde alle—word al

4102 auȝt[e]—owhte
4104 good while—goode wyl
4105 hap—MS. hape
4108 of (1)—fro
4109 whiche—which
4111 ben haboundaunt—ben
outraius / or habownd-
ant

pou art charged wiþ þe weyȝte of þe questiou[n] and wery wiþ lengþe of my resoun. and þat pou abidest som swetnesse of songe. tak þan þis drauȝt and whan pou art wel refreshed and refet pou shalt ben more stedfast to stye in to heyere questiouns.

Take, then, this draught, with which when refreshed, you may more strongly proceed to higher matters.

4117

SI UIS CELSI IURA.

Yif pou wolt demen in þi pure pouȝt þe ryȝtes or þe lawes of þe heye þund[ere]re. þat is to seyne of god. loke pou and bihold þe heyȝtes of souereyne heuene. ¶ þere kepen þe sterres by ryȝtful alliaunce of þinges hir olde pees. þe sonne ymoewed by hys rody fire. ne destourbiþ nat þe colde cercle of þe moone. ¶ Ne þe sterre yclepid þe bere. þat enclinip hys rauysseyge courses abouten þe souereyne heyȝt of þe worlde. ne þe same sterre vrsa nis neuer mo wasshen in þe depe westerne see. ne coueitip nat to dyȝen hys flaumbes in þe see of [the] occian. al pouȝ he see oþer sterres yplounged in to þe see. ¶ And hesperus þe sterre bodip and tellip alwey þe late nyȝtes. And lucifer þe sterre bryngeþ aȝeyne þe clere day. ¶ And þus makip loue enterchaungeable þe perdurable courses. and þus is discordable bataile yput oute of þe contre of þe sterres. þis accordaunce attempreþ by euene-lyke manere[s] þe elementes. þat þe moyste þinges striuen nat wiþ þe drye þinges. but ȝiuen place by stoundes. and þat þe colde þinges ioynen hem by feiþ to þe hote þinges. and þat þe lyȝt[e] fyre arist in to heyȝte. and þe heuy erpes aualen by her weyȝtes. ¶ by þise same cause þe floury yere ȝeldeþ swote smellys in þe fyrste somer sesoun warmynge. and þe hote somer dryeþ þe cornes. and

[The syxte Metur.]

If thou wouldst explore the laws of the high Thunderer, behold the lofty heavens, where, bound by fixed laws, the stars keep their ancient pence. There the rosy Sun does not invade the moon's colder sphere. Nor doth the Bear stray from his appointed bounds, to quench his light in the western main. Vesper always makes its wonted appearance at eve.

4128

Lucifer ushers in the morn. So mutual love moves all things, and from the starry region banishes all strife. This concord in equal measures tempers the elements, so that the moist atoms war no more with the dry, nor heat with cold contends; but the aspiring flame soars aloft, while down the heavy earth descends. By these same causes the flowing year yields sweet smells in the warm spring-tide; the hot summer ripens the corn. Autumn comes crowned

4115 *tak*—MS. take, C. tak
4116 *refet*—reflect
shall ben—shal be
steadfast—atydefast
4118 *pou wolt*—pou wys wilt
4119 *þund[ere]re*—thou-
seyne—seyn
4120 *bihold*—MS. biholde, C.
byhold [rody
4122 *rody*—MS. rody, C.

4123 *stro*—Fyr
4123 *cercle*—clerke
4125 *courses*—ours
heyȝt—heyhte
4127 *westerne*—westrene
dyȝen—deyn
4128 [the]—from C.
he see—MS. it sewe, C. he
see
oþer—oother

4131 *aȝeyne*—agein
4133 *outo*—owt
4134 *euene-lyke manere[s]*—
euenelyk maneres
4135 *striuen*—stryuynge
nat—omitted
4136 *but*—omitted
4138 *lyȝt[e], fyre arist*—lyhte
fyr arysith
4140 *yere*—ȝer

with plenty, and winter wete the earth with showers. These changes give life and growth to all that breathe; and at last by death efface whatever has had birth.

(* fol. 52 b.)
Meanwhile the

4148

world's Creator, the Source of all, the Lawgiver, the wise Judge, sits above equitably directing all things. Those things which have been set in motion by him are also checked and forced to move in an endless round, lest they go from their source, and become chaotic.

4157

This love is common to all things, and all things tend to good; so, urged by this, they all revert to that First Cause that gave them being.

autumpne cometh azeine heuy of apples. and þe fletyng reyne byðdeweþ þe wynter. þis attemperaunce norýssip and brynggeþ furþe al þinge þat bredip lyfe in þis worlde. ¶ and þilk same attemperaunce rauýssyng hided and bynymeþ and drenchep vndir þe last[e] depe alle *þinges yborn. ¶ Amonges þise þinges sitteþ þe heye makere kyng and lorde. welle and bygynnyng. lawe and wise Iuge. to don equite and gouernip and encliniþ þe bridles of þinges. and þo þinges þat he stireþ to don by moeuyng he wiþdraweþ and arestip and affermip þe moeueable or wandryng þinges. ¶ For 3if þat he ne clepip nat azein þe ryzt goyng of þinges. and 3if þat he ne constreyned[e] hem nat eftesones in to roundenesse enclined þe þinges þat ben now continued by stable ordinaunce. þei sholde deperten from hir welle. þat is to sein from hir bygynnyng and failen. þat is to sein tournen in to nauzt. ¶ þis is þe commune loue of alle þinges. and alle þinges axen to be holden by þe fyn of good. For ellys ne myzten þei nat lasten yif þei ne come nat eftesones azeine by loue retourned to þe cause þat haþ zeuen hem beyng. þat is to seyn to god. 4162

[The *secunde* prose.]

P. Do you see what follows from our arguments?

B. What is it?

P. That all fortune is good.

B. How can that be?

P. Since all fortune, whether prosperous or adverse, is for the reward of the good or the punishment of

IAM NE IGITUR UIDES.

Sest þou nat þan what þing folweþ alle þe þinges þat I haue seid. what þing quod I. ¶ Certys quod she outerly þat al fortune is good. and how may þat be quod .I. ¶ Now vndirstand quod she so as [alle fortune wheyther so it be Ioyeful fortune / or aspre] fortune is 3iuen eiper by cause of gerdonyng or ellys of exercisyng of goode folk or ellys by cause to punissen.

4142 cometh azeine — comth azein

4143 reyne—reyn

4144 furþe al þinge—forth alle thing

4145 bredip lyfe—berith lyf

4146 worlde—world

4147 last[e] depe—laste deth

4148 yborn—M.S. yborne, C.

4149 lorde—lord

4140 wise—wys

4150 stireþ—sterith

d-n—gon

4151 þe—omitted

4153 clepip—klepede

4154 constreyned[e] — con-

streynede

roundenesse — Rownd-

nesses

4156 sholde—sholden

4158 tournen—torne

of—to

4150 be—ben

4151 eftesones azeine — eft sones azein

4152 hab—M.S. hape

4153 þing—thinge

4155 outerly—al owtrely

al—alle

4156-7 [alle—aspre]—from

C.

4159 goode—good

or ellys to chastysen shrewes. ¶ þan is alle fortune good. þe whiche fortune is certeyne þat it be eiþer ryȝtful or profitable. ¶ For soþe þis is a ful verray resoun quod I. and yif I considere þe purueaunce and þe destine þat þou tauȝtest me a litel here byforne þis sentence is susteyned by stedfast resouns. but yif it like vnto þe lat vs noumbre hem amonges þilk[e] þinges of whiche þou seidest a litel here byforne þat þei ne were nat able to ben ywened to þe poeple. ¶ whi so quod she. for þat þe comune worde of men mysusiþ quod I. þis manere speche of fortune. and sein ofte tymes [þat] þe fortune of som wyȝt is wicked. wilt þou þan quod she þat I proche a litel to þe wordes of þe poeple so it seme nat to hem þat I be ouer moche departid as fro þe vsage of man kynde. as þou wolt quod I. ¶ Demest þou nat quod she þat al þing þat profitiþ is good. ȝis quod I. certis þilk þing þat exercisiþ or corigþ profitiþ. I confesse it wel quod I. þan is it good quod she. whi nat quod I. but þis is þe fortune [quod she] of hem þat eiþer ben put in vertue and batailen aȝeins aspre þinges. or ellys of hem þat eschewen and declinen fro vices and taken þe weye of vertue. ¶ þis ne may nat I denye quod I. ¶ But what seist þou of þe myrre fortune þat is ȝeuē to good folk in gerdoun deuiniþ ouȝt þe poeples þat it is wicked. nay forsoþe quod I. but þei demen as it soþe is þat it is ryȝt good. ¶ And what seist þou of þat oþer fortune quod she. þat al þouȝt it be aspre and restreiniþ þe shrewes by ryȝtful tourment. weniþ ouȝt þe poeple þat it be good. nay quod I. ¶ But þe poeple demiþ þat it be most wrecched of alle þinges þat may ben þouȝt. war now and loke wel quod she lest þat we in folwyng þe opynioun of poeple haue con-

the bad, all fortune is good which is either just or useful. But let us put this opinion among those positions which thou saidst were not commonly believed by the people.

P. Why so?

B. Because it is a common expression that the fortune of such a one is bad.

P. Do you wish me to conform for awhile to the language of the people, lest we should seem to depart too much from the popular mode of expression?

B. As you please.

P. Is everything profitable that is good?

B. Yes, certainly.

P. That which exercises or corrects is profitable?

4186

B. It is.

P. Therefore it is good? B. Yes.

P. This is the fortune of the virtuous who combat with adversity, or of those who, relinquishing vice, pursue the path of virtue?

B. It is.

P. The vulgar regard that prosperity which is bestowed as a reward on the good to be beneficial, and they believe those calamities by which the wicked are punished as the most miserable things that can be imagined. But in following the popular opinion, let us be aware of being involved in some new and incredible consequences.

4174 here byforne—her by-
forn
4175 stedfast—stȝdefast
4176 noumbre—noumbren
þilk[e]—thilke
4177 here byforne—her by-
forn

4178 ywened—weened
4179 word—word
4180 [þat]—from C.
4181 wicked—wykkode
4182 proche—aproche
4183 al—alle
4184 þilk—thilke

4188 [quod she]—from C.
4191 weye—wey
4193 dewiniþ—demyth
4194 ouȝt—awht
4195 soþe—soth
4196 ouȝt—awht
4199 be—is

B. What is that?
P. We have decided that the fortune of the virtuous or of those growing up in virtue must needs be good—but that the fortune of the wicked must be most wretched.

B. That's true, though none dare acknowledge it.

P. Why so?

The wise man ought not to be cast down, when he has to wage war with Fortune, no more than the valiant man ought to be dismayed on hearing the noise of the

[* fol. 33.]
battle. The dangers of war enable the one to acquire more glory, and the difficulties of the other aid him to confirm and im-

4217

prove his wisdom. Thus virtue, in its literal acceptation, is a power that, relying on its own strength, overcomes all obstacles. You, who have made so much progress in virtue, are not to be carried away by delights and bodily lusts. You must engage in a fierce conflict with every fortune—with adversity, lest it dismay you—with prosperity, lest it corrupt you. Seize the golden mean with all your strength. All below or above this line is a contemptible and a thankless felicity. The choice of fortune lies in your own hands, but remember that even adverse fortune, unless it exercises the

fessed *and* concluded þing þat is vnable to be wened to þe poeple. what is þat quod I ¶ Certys quod she it folweþ or comeþ of þinges þat ben graunted þat alle fortune what so euer it be. of hem þat eyþer ben in possessioun of vertue. [or in the encres of vertu] or ellys in þe purchasyng of vertue. þat pilke fortune is good. ¶ And þat alle fortune is ryzt wicked to hem þat dwellen in shrewednesse. as who seiþ. *and þus wenep nat þe poeple.* ¶ þat is soþe quod I. ¶ Al be it so þat noman dar confessen it ne byknoven it. ¶ whi so quod she. For ryzt as no strong man ne semeþ nat to abassen or disdaignen as *ofte tyme as he hereþ þe noise of þe bataile. ne also it ne semeþ nat to þe wyse man to beren it greuously as oft[e] as he is lad in to þe strif of fortune. for boþe to þat on man *and* eke to þat oþer pilke difficulte is þe matere to þat oon man of encrease of his glorious renoun. *and* to þat oþer man to conferme hys sapience. þat is to seine þe asprenesse of hys estat. ¶ For perfore is it called uertue. for þat it sustonip *and* enforcep by hys strengþes þat it nis nat ouer-comen by aduersites. ¶ Ne certys þou þat art put in þe encrose or in þe heyzt of uertue ne hast nat comen to fleten wiþ delices *and* forto welken in bodily lust. ¶ þou sowest or plauntest a ful egre bataile in þi corage azeins euery fortune. for þat þe sorweful fortune ne confounde þe nat. ne þat þe myrre fortune ne corruppe þe nat. ¶ Occupy þe mene by stedfast strengþes. for al þat euer is vndir þe mene. or ellys al þat ouer-passeþ þe mene despiseþ wefulnesses. ¶ As who seiþ. it is vicious *and* ne hap no mede of hys trauaile. ¶ For it is set in þoure hand. as who seiþ it lieþ in þoure power what fortune þow is leuest. þat is to seyne good or yuel. ¶ For alle fortune

4204 comþ—comth

4206 [or—vertu] from C.

4208 wicked—wykkede

4210 soþe—soth

4211 confessen—confesse

4212 no strong—the stronge

4213 abassen—abayssen

4215 oft[e]—ofte

4219 seyne—seyn

4223 heyte—heyhte

4224 welken—wellen

4226 confounde—MS. con-

founded, C. confownde

4227 Occupy—Ocuype

4229 stedfast—strydefast

4230 hap—MS. hape

4231 eet—MS. sette, C. set

4233 lieþ—liþh

4233 seyne—seyn

þat semeþ sharpe or aspre yif it ne exercise nat þe good virtues of the
folk. ne chastisiþ þe wicked folk. it punisseþ. 4235 good or chastises
the wicked, is a
punishment.

BELLA BIS QUENIS. ET CETERA.

ÞE wrekere attrides ¶ þat is to seyne agamenon þat
wrouzt[e] and continued[e] þe batailes by ten ȝere
recouered[e] and purged[e] in wrekyng by þe destruc-
cioun of troie þe loste chambres of mariage of hys broþer 4239
pis is to seyn þat [he] agamenon wan aȝein Eleine þat
was Menelaus wif his broþer. In þe mene while þat
þilke agamenon desired[e] to ȝeuen sailles to þe grek-
ysse nauye and bouzt[e] aȝein þe wyndes by blode. he
vncloped[e] hym of pite as fader. and þe sory prest
ȝiueþ in sacrificyng þe wreched kuytting of prote of þe
douzter. ¶ þat is to sein þat agamenon lete kuytten þe
prote of hys douzter by þe prest. to maken alliaunce wip 4247
hys goddes. and for to haue wynde wip whiche he
myzt[e] wende to troie. ¶ Itakus þat is to sein vlixies
bywept[e] hys felawes ylorn þe whiche felawes þe
fiers[e] pholifemus ligginge in his grete Caue had[de]
freten and dreint in hys empty wombe. but napeles
polifemus wood for his blinde visage ȝeld to vlixies ioye
by hys sorowful teres. pis is to seyn þat vlixes smot
oute þe eye of poliphemus þat stod in hys forhede. for 4255
whiche vlixes hadde ioie whan he saw poliphemus
wepying and blynde. ¶ Hercules is celebrable for hys
hard[e] trauaile he dawntede þe proude Centauris half
hors half man. and he rafte þe despoilyng fro þe

[The seunde
Metur.]Atides carried on
a ten years' war to
punish the licen-
tious Paris.With blood
he purchased
propitious
gales for the
Grecian fleet, by
casting off all
fatherly pity, and
sacrificing his
daughter
Iphigenia to the
vengeance of
Diana.Ulysses bewailed
his lost mates,
devoured by
Polyphemus,
but, having de-
prived the Cyclop
of his sight, he
rejoiced to hear
the monster's
roar.Hercules is
renowned for his
many labours, so
successfully over-
come. He over-
threw the proud
Centaurus;

4234 *sharpe*—sharp
4236 *seyne*—seyn
4237 *wrouzt[e]*—wrowhte
4238 *continued[e]*—continuede
4239 *ȝere*—ȝer
4238 *purged[e]*—purgede
4240 *[he]*—from C.
4241 *wan*—MS. wanne, C. wan
4242 *desired[e]*—desirede
4243 *bouzt[e]*—bowhte
4244 *blode*—blod
4244 *vncloped[e]*—vnclotheþe
4245 *as*—of
4245 *kuytting*—MS. kny-

tyng, C. kuyttinge
4246 *lete*—let
4247 *kuytten*—MS. knydden, C.
4248 *kuttyn*
4248 *hauē*—han
4249 *myzt[e]* *wende*—myhte
4250 *wenden*
4250 *bywept[e]*—by-wepte
4251 *ylorn*—MS. ylorne, C. y-
lorn
4251 *fiers[e]*—feerse
4252 *had[de]*—hadde
4253 *ȝeld*—yald
4254 *sorowful*—sorwful

4254 *smot*—MS. smote, C.
4255 *smot*
4255 *oute*—owt
4256 *stod*—MS. stode, C. stood
4257 *forhede*—forehed
4258 *saw*—say
4258 *hard[e]* *trauaile*—harde
4259 *trauayles*
4259 *dawntede*—MS. dawnded,
C. dawntede
4259 *half*—MS. hals
4260 *rafte*—byrafte
4260 *fro*—from

he slew the
Nemean lion and
wore his skin as
a trophy of his
victory; he smote
the Harpies with
his arrows; he
carried off the
golden apples of
the Hesperides,
and killed the
watchful dragon;
he bound Cer-
berus with a
threefold chain;
he gave the body
of proud Diomedes
as food for the
tyrant's horses;

he slew the ser-
pent Hydra;
he caused
Achelous to hide
his blushing
head within
his banks;

he left Anteus
dead upon the
[* fol. 33 b.]
Lybian shore;
he appeased
Evander's wrath
by killing Cacus;

he slew the
Erymanthean
boar;

and bore the
weight of Atlas
upon his
shoulders.

These labours
justly raised him
to the rank of a
god.

Go then, ye noble
souls, and follow
the path of this
great example.

cruel lyoun þat is to seyne he slouȝ þe lyoun *and*
raffe hym hys skyn. he smot þe brids þat hyȝten
arpijs [in þe palude of lyrne] wiþ certeyne arwes.
he rauyssed[e] applis fro þe wakyng dragoun. *and*
hys hand was þe more heuy for þe golde[ne]
metal. He drouȝ Cerberus þe hound of helle by
hys treble cheyne. he ouer-comer as it is seid haþ
put an vnmeke lorde fodre to hys cruel hors ¶ þis is
to sein. þat hercules slouȝ diomedes *and* made his hors
to etyn hym. and he hercules slouȝ Idra þe serpent *and*
brend[e] þe venym. and achelaus þe flode defouled[e] in
his forhede dreint[e] his shamefast visage in his
strondes. þis is to sein þat achelaus couþe transfigure

4273 hym self in to dyuerse lykenesse. *and* as he fauȝt wiþ
orcules at þe laste he turnid[e] hym in to a bole. and
hercules brak of oon of hys hornes. *and* achelaus for
shame hidde hym in hys ryuer. ¶ And [he] hercules
*cast[e] adoun Antheus þe geaunt in þe strondes of
libye. *and* kacus apaised[e] þe wrappes of euander. þis
is to sein þat hercules slouȝ þe Monstre kacus *and*
apaished[e] wiþ þat deef þe wrappe of euander. ¶ And
þe bristled[e] boor marked[e] wiþ scomes þe sholdres of
hercules. þe whiche sholdres þe heye cercle of heuene
sholde preste. *and* þe laste of his labours was þat he
sustened[e] þe heuene vpon his nekke vnbowed. *and* he
deserued[e] eftsones þe heuene to ben þe pris of his
laste trauayle ¶ Gop now þan ȝe stronge men þere as
þe heye weye of þe grete ensample ledeþ ȝou. ¶ O nice
4288 men whi nake ȝe ȝoure bakkes. as who seiþ. ¶ O ȝe

4260 *seyne*—seyn
4261 *smot*—MS. smote, C.
smot
4262 [*in—lyrne*]*—*from C.
4263 *rauysed[e]*—rauyssh-
ede
4266 *seid*—MS. seide, C.
sayd
4267 *haþ*—MS. haþe
4267 *lorde*—lord
4269 *etyn*—freten
4270 *brend[e]*—brende

4270 *flode defouled[e]*—flood
defowlede
4271 *forhede dreint[e]*—for-
hed dreynthe
4273 *lykenesse*—lyknesses
4274 *turnid[e]*—tornede
4276 *brak*—MS. brake, C.
brak
hys—hise
4276 [*he*]*—*from C.
4278-80 *apaished[e]*—apay-
sede

4281 *bristled[e]*—brysteleda
marked[e]—markeda
4282 *cercle*—clerke
4283 *preste*—thristo
4286 *deserued[e]*—deseruode
4289 *Gop*—MS. Gope
þere—ther
4287 *weye*—way
4288 *nake*—MS. make, C.
nake

slowe *and* delicat men whi fley 3e aduersites. *and* ne
fyzten nat azeins hem by vertue to wynnyn þe mede of
þe heuene. for þe erþe ouer-comen zeueþ þe sterres.
¶ þis is to seyne þat whan þat erþely lust is ouer-comen.
a man is makod worþi to þe heuene.

O ye slothful
ones, wherefore
do ye basely fly!

4291

He who conquers
earth doth gain
the heavens.

EXPLICIT LIBER QUARTUS.

INCIPIT LIBER QUINTUS.

DIXERAT ORACIONISQUE CURSUM.

She hadde seid *and* tourned[e] þe cours of hir resoun to
somme oþer þinges to ben tretid *and* to ben ysped.
þan seide I. Certys ryztful is þin amonestyng *and* ful
digne by auctorite. but þat þou seidest som tyme þat
þe questioun of þe deuyn purueaunce is enlaced wip
many oþer questiouns. I vndir-stonde wel *and* proue it
by þe same þinge. but I axe yif þat þou wenest þat hap
be any þing in any weys. *and* if þou wenest þat hap be
any [thing] what is it. þan quod she. I haste me to
3elden *and* assoilen þe to þe dette of my byheste *and*
to shewen *and* openen þe wey by whicho wey þou maist
come azein to þi contre. ¶ but al be it so þat þe þinges
whiche þat þou axest ben ryzt profitable to knowe.
3itte ben þei diuers somewhat fro þe pape of my purpos.
And it is to douten þat þou ne be makod weery by
mysweys so þat þou ne mayst nat suffise to mesuren þe
ryzt weye. ¶ Ne doute þe þer-of no þing quod I. for
forto knowen þilke þinges to-gidre in þe whiche þinges
I delite me gretly. þat shal ben to me in stede of reste.
Syn it nis nat to douten of þe þinges folwyng whan
euery side of þi disputisoun shal be stedfast to me by
vndoutous feip. þan seide she. þat manere wol I don

[The fyrste prose.]

When Philo-
sophy had thus
spoken, and was
about to discuss
other matters I
interrupted her.
B. Thy exhorta-
tion is just and
worthy of thy
authority, but
thou saidst that
the question
of the Divine
Superintendence
or Providence is
involved with
many others—
and this I believe.
I am desirous,
however, of know-
ing whether
there be such a
thing as Chance,
and what thou
thinkest it is.
P. I hasten to
fulfil my promise
and to show the
road to your own
country. But al-
though these
things you ques-
tion me about are
profitable to
know, yet they
lead us a little out
of our way. And
by straying from
the path you may
be too fatigued to
return to the
right road.
B. Don't be
afraid of that, for
it will refresh me
as much as rest
to know these
things in which I
am delightedly

4289 *slowe* — MS. slou3, C.
slowe
fley—flee
4292 *seyne*—seyn
4294 *seid*—MS. seide, C. seyð
þe—by
4297 *som tyme*—whilom
4298 þe (2)—thy

4300 *þinge*—thing
4302 [*thing*]*—*from C.
4303 *3elden*—yilden
assoilen—MS. assailen, C.
assoilen
byheste—lyhest
4304-5 *whiche*—which
4306 *ben*—MS. bene

4307 *pape*—paath
4312 *stede*—styde
4314 *disputisoun*—disputa-
cioun
be—han ben
stedfast—stydefast

interested.

P. I will then comply with thy requests. If we define Chance to be an event produced by an unintelligent motion, and not by a chain or connection of causes, I should then affirm that Chance is nothing and an empty sound. What room is there for folly and disorder where all things are restrained by order, through the ordinance of God? For it is a great truth that nothing can spring out of nothing. Now, if anything arises without the operation of a cause, it proceeds from nothing. But if this is impossible, then there can be no

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such a thing as Chance, as we have defined it. B. Is there nothing, then, that may be called Chance or Fortune? Is there nothing (hid from the vulgar) to which these words may be applied?

P. Aristotle defines this matter with much precision and

[* fol. 34.]

probability.

B. How?

P. So often as a man does anything for the sake of any other thing, and another thing than what he intended to do is produced by other causes, that thing so produced is called Chance. As if a man trench the ground for tillage

pe. and bygan to speken ryzt þus ¶ Certys quod she yif any wyzt diffinissh hap in þis manere. þat is to seyn. þat hap is bytidynge y-brouzt forþe by foelyshe moeuynge. and by no knyttyng of causes. ¶ I conferme þat hap nis ryzt nauzt in no wise. and I deme al outerly þat hap nis ne dwellip but a voys. ¶ As who seip. but an ydel worde wip outhen any significacioun of þing summittid to þat voys. for what place myzt[e] ben left or dwellynge to folio and to disordinaunce. syn þat god ledip and streynip alle þinges by ordre. ¶ For þis sentence is verray and soþe þat no þinge ne hap his beyng of nouzt. to [the] whiche sentence none of þise olde folk ne wipside neuere al be it so þat þei ne vndirstoden ne moeueden it nauzt by god prince and gynner of wirkyng. but þei casten as a manere foundement of subgit material. þat is to seyn of [the] nature of alle resoun. and 3if þat ony þinge is woxen or comen of no causes. þan shal it seme þat pilke þinge is comen or woxen of nouzt. but yif þis ne may nat ben don. þan is it nat possible þat þere hap ben any swiche þing as I haue diffinissid a litel here byforne. ¶ How shal it þan ben quod I. nis þer þan no þing þat by ryzt may be cleped eyþer happpe or ellis auenture of fortune. or is þer ouzt al *be it so þat it is hidd fro þe poeple to whiche þise wordes ben couenable. Myn aristotul quod she. in þe book of his phisik diffinissh þis þing by short resoun and neyze to þe soþe. ¶ In whiche manere quod I. ¶ As ofte quod she as men don any þing for grace of any oþer þing. and an oþer þinge þan pilke þing þat men ententen to doon bytideþ by som[e] causes it is ycleped happpe. ¶ Ryzt as a man dalf þe erþe by

4317 seyn—seyng

4318 forþe—forth

4322 wordes—word

4323 myzt[e]—myhte

4324 left—laffe

4325 streynip—constreynyth

4326 soþe—soth

no þinge—nothing

hap—MS. hape

4327 [the]—from C.

4330 gynner—bygynners

4331 [the]—from C.

4332 3if—MS. 3it, C. yif

þinge—thing

4335 þat—ben—þat hap be

hap—MS. hape

swiche—swich

4338 happpe—hap

4339 hidd—MS. hidde, C.

hidd

4340 whiche—which

4342 neyze—nehg

whiche—which

4343 don—MS. done, C. don

4344 þinge—thing

4345 som[e]—some

4346 happpe—hap

cause of tylienge of þe felde. *and* fond þere a gobet of golde by-doluen. þan wenen folk þat it is fallen by fortunous bytydyng. but for soþe it nis nat for nauȝt for it haþ hys propre causes of whiche causes þe cours vnforseyn and vnwar semip to han maket happe. ¶ For yif þe tilier in þe erpe ne delue nat in þe felde. and yif þe hider of þe golde ne hadde hidd þe golde in pilke place. þe golde ne had[de] nat ben founde. þise ben þan þe causes of þe abreggyng of fortune hap. þe whiche abreggyng of fortune hap comet of causes encountryng *and* flowyng to-gidre to hem selfe. *and* nat by þe entencioun of þe doer. ¶ For neiper þe hider of þe gold. ne þe deluer of þe felde ne vndirstanden nat þat þe golde sholde han be founde. but as I seide. it bytidde *and* ran to-gidre þat he dalf þere as þat oþer hadde hidd þe golde. Now may I þus diffinissen happe. ¶ Happe is an vnwar bytydyng of causes assembled in þinges þat ben don for som oþer þinge. but pilke ordre procedyng by an vneschewable byndyng to-gidre. whiche þat descendet fro þe wel of purueaunce þat ordeinet alle þinges in hire places *and* in hire tymes makeþ þat þe causes rennen *and* assemblen to-gidre.

and find gold, then this is believed to happen by chance, although it is not so. For if the tiller had not ploughed the field, and if the hider of the gold had not concealed it in that spot, the gold had not been found. These, then, are the causes of a fortuitous acquisition which proceeds from a conflux of encountering causes, and not from the intention of the doer. For neither the hider of the gold nor the husbandman intended or understood that the gold should be found. But it happened by the concurrence of these two causes that the one did dig where the other had hidden the money. Chance, then, is an unexpected event, by a concurrence of causes, following an action designed for a particular purpose. This concurrence of causes proceeds from that order which flows from the fountain of Providence and disposes all things as to place and time.

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RUPIS ACHEMENIE.

Tigris [*and*] eufrates resoluen *and* spryngen of a welle in þe kragges of þe roche of þe contre of achemenye þere as þe fleenge [batayle] ficchip hire dartes retournid in þe brestes of hem þat folwen hem. ¶ And sone aftre þe same ryueres tigris *and* eufrates vniogngen *and* de-

[The fyrste Metur.] Where the flying Parthian doth pierce his pursuers with his shafte, there from the Achemenian heights flow the Tigris and Eufrates, but soon

4347 of (1) — to
fond — MS. fonde, C.
fownde
4348 golde — gold
fallen — byfalle
4349 for (2) — of
4350 hap — MS. haþe
hys — hise
4351 happe — hap
4352 tilier — tylyere
delue — dolue
4353 hider — hydere
golde — gold
hidd — MS. hidde

4353-4 golde — gold
4354 had[de] — hadde
4355 fortune — fortuit
whiche — which
4356 fortune — fortuit
comet — comth
4357 flowyng — MS. folwyng,
C. flowyng
selfe — self
4358 doer — doers
hider — hidere
4359 deluer — deluers
felde — feeld [en
vndirstanden — vndirstod-

4360 golde — gold
4361 hidd — MS. hidde, C.
hyd
4362 happe (both) — hap
4363 whiche — which
4366 descendet — MS. defend-
ep, C. descendith
wel — welle
4369 [and] — from C.
e — oo
4371 [batayle] — from C.
4373 þe — thio

their streams divide and flow into separate channels. But should they unite again, in the impetuous stream, boats, ships, and trees would be all intermingled, whirled about; and blind Chance seems to direct the current's course. But the sloping earth, the laws of fluids, govern these things. So though Chance seems to wander unrestrained, it is nevertheless curbed and restrained by Divine Providence.

[The 3rd. prose.]

B. Is there any free-will in this chain of cohering causes? Or doth the chain of destiny constrain the motions of the human mind? *P.* There is a freedom of the will possessed by every rational being. A rational being has judgment to judge of and discern everything. Of himself he knows what he is to avoid or to desire. He seeks what he judges desirable, and he shuns what he deems should be avoided. A rational being possesses, then, the liberty of choosing and rejecting. This liberty is not equal in all beings. In heavenly substances, as spirits, &c., judgment is clear, and the will is incorruptible, and has a ready and efficacious power of doing things which are desired.

[* fol. 34 b.]

parten hire watres. and yif þei comen to-gidre *and* ben assembled *and* clepid to-gidre in to o cours. þan moten pilke pinges fletyn to-gidre whiche þat þe water of þe entrechaungyng flode bryngeþ þe shippes *and* þe stokkes araced wiþ þe flood moten assemble. *and* þe watres ymedlyd wrappiþ or implieþ many fortunel happes or maneres. þe whiche wandryng happes napeles pilke enclynyng lowenes of þe erþe. *and* þe flowyngge ordre of þe slidyng water gouerniþ. ¶ Ryzt so fortune þat someþ as [þat] it fletiþ wiþ alaked or vngouerned[e] bridles. It suffriþ bridles þat is to seyn to ben gouerned *and* passeþ by pilke lawe. þat is to sein by þe deuyne ordinaunce.

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ANIMADUERTO INQUAM.

P. his vnderstonde I wel quod I. *and* accorde wel þat it is ryzt as þou seist. but I axe yif þer be any liberte or fre wil in þis ordre of causes þat cliuen þus to-gidre in hem self. ¶ or ellys I wolde witen yif þat þe destinal cheine constreiniþ þe moeueyngge of þe corages of men. yis quod she þer is liberte of fre wille. ne þer ne was neuer no nature of resoun þat it ne hadde liberte of fre wille. ¶ For every ping þat may naturely vsen resoun. it haþ doom by whiche it discerniþ *and* demipi every ping. ¶ þan knoweþ it by it self pinges þat ben to fleen. *and* pinges þat ben to desiren. *and* pilk ping þat any wyzt demeþ to ben desired þat axeþ or desireþ he *and* fleep [thilke] ping þat he troueþ ben to fleen. ¶ wherfore in alle pinges þat resoun is. in hem also is libertee of willyng *and* of nillyngge. ¶ But I ne ordeyne nat. as who seiþ. I ne graunte nat þat þis libertee be euene like in alle pinges. forwhi in þe souereyns deuynes substaunces. þat is to *seyn in spiritz ¶ Iugement is

4374 *to-gidre*—to-gyderes

4376 *whiche*—which

4377 *flode*—flood

4378 *assemble*—asemblyn

4380 *enclynyng*—declynynge

4381 *lowene*—lowncesse

4383 [þat]—from C.

engouerned[e]—vngouern-

ede

4385 *þe*—thilke

4388 *or*—of

4390 *hem*—hym

4392 *þis*—MS. yif. C. yis

4392-94 *wille*—wil

4395 *whiche*—which

4397 *pilk*—thilke

4399 [thilke]—from C.

more clere *and* wil nat be corumped. *and* hap myzt
rody to speden þinges þat ben desired. ¶ But þe soules
of men moten nedes ben more free whan þei loken hem
in þe speculacioun or lokynge of þe deuyne þouzt. *and*
lasse free whan þei sliden in to þe bodies. *and* zit lasse
free whan þei ben gadred to-gidre *and* comprehendid in
erþely membris. but þe last[e] seruage is whan þat þei
ben zeuen to vices. *and* han yfalle fro þe possessioun of
hire propre resoun. ¶ For after þat þei han cast awaye
hir eyen fro þe lyzt of þe souereyn soþefastnesse to lowe
þinges *and* dirke. ¶ Anon þei dirken by þe cloude of
ignoraunce *and* ben troubled by felonous talentz. to þe
whiche talentz whan þei approchen *and* assenten. þei
hepen *and* encresen þe seruage whiche þei han ioigned
to hem self. *and* in þis manere þei ben caitifs fro hire
propre libertee. þe whiche þinges napeles þe lokynge of
þe deuyne purueaunce seep þat alle þinges byholdep
and seep fro eterne. *and* ordeyneþ hem eueryche in her
merites. as þei ben predestinat. *and* it is seid in grek.
þat alle þinges he seep *and* alle þinges he hereþ. 4424

PURO CLARUM LUMINE.

Homer wiþ þe hony mouþe. þat is to seyn. homer
wiþ þe swete dites syngeþ þat þe sonne is cleer by
pure lyzt. napeles zit ne may it nat by þe inferme lyzt
of hys bemes breken or percen þe inwarde entrailes of
þe erþe. or ellys of þe see. ¶ so ne seep nat god makere
of þe grete worlde to hym þat lokeþ alle þinges from on
heye ne wiþstandip nat no þinges by heynesses of erþe.
ne þe nyzt ne wiþstondep nat to hym by þe blake
cloudes. ¶ pilke god seep in o strook of þouzt alle
þinges þat ben or weren or schullen come. ¶ *and* pilke

The souls of men must needs be more free when employed in the contemplation of the Divine Mind, and less so when they enter into a body, and still less free when enclosed and confined in earthly members; but the most extreme servitude is when they are given over to vice and wholly fallen from their proper reason. For at once they are enveloped by the cloud of ignorance and are troubled by pernicious desires, by yielding to which they aid and increase that slavery which they brought upon themselves, and thus even under the liberty proper to them, they remain captives. Yet the eye of Providence, beholding all things from eternity, sees all this and disposes according to their merit all things as they are predestinated. He, as Homer says of the sun, sees and hears all things.

[The 2^d. Metw.]

The sweet-tongued Homer sings of the sun's pure light. Yet the sun's beams cannot pierce into the inner bowels of the earth, nor into the depths of the sea. But God, the world's maker, beholding from on high, has his vision impeded neither by earth nor cloud. At a glance he sees all events, present, past, and future.

4405 hap—MS. hape
4411 last[e]—laste
4412 fro—from
4415 cloude—clowdes
4418 whiche—which

4423 seid—MS. seide, C. seyde
4425 mouþe—Mowth
4428 percen—MS. perten,
C. percen
inwarde—inward

4430 worlde—world
on hope—an hegh
4431 nat—omitted
4434 schullen come—shollen
comyn

God, then, that alone sees all things, may indeed be called the true Sun.

god for he lokep *and* seep alle *pinges* al oon. pou maist seyn pat he is *pe* verray sonne. 4436

TAMEN EGO EN INQUAM.

[The 3rd. prose.]

B. I am distracted by a more difficult doubt than ever.

God's foreknowledge seems to me inconsistent with man's free-will. For if God foresees all things, and cannot be deceived, then that which Providence hath foreseen must needs happen. If God from eternity doth foreknow not only the works, but the designs and wills of men, there can be no liberty of will—nor can there be any other action or will than that which a Divine and infallible Providence hath foreseen. For if things fall out

4451 contrary to such foreseeing, and are wrested another way the presence of God in regard to futurity would not be sure and unerring—it would be nothing but an uncertain opinion of them; but I take it to be impious and unlawful to believe this of God. Nor do I approve of the reasoning made use of by some. For they say that a thing is not necessarily to happen because God hath foreseen it, but rather because it is to happen it cannot be hid from the Divine Providence.

PAn seide I now am I confounded by a more harde doute þan I was. what doute is pat quod she. ¶ For certys I coniecte now by whiche *pinges* þou art troubled. It semep quod I to repugnen *and* to contrarien gretly pat god knowep byform alle *pinges*. *and* pat þer is any fredom of liberte. for yif so be pat god lokep alle *pinges* byform. ne god ne may nat ben desseiuud in no manere. þan mot it nedes ben pat alle *pinges* bytyden *pe* whiche pat *pe* purueaunce of god hap sein byform to comen. ¶ For whiche yif pat god knowep by-form nat oonly *pe* werkes of men. but also hir conseils *and* hir willes. þan ne shal þer be no liberte of arbitre. ne certys þer ne may ben noon oper dede ne no wille but pilke whiche *pe* deuyne purueaunce pat ne may nat ben desseiuud hap feled byform ¶ For yif pat þei myzten wryþen away in oper manere þan þei ben purueyed. þan ne sholde þer ben no stedfast prescience of *pinge* to comen but rapþer an vncerteyn oppinioun. *pe* whiche *pinge* to trowen on god I deme it felonie *and* vnleueful. ¶ Ne I ne proeue nat pilk same resoun. as who seiþ I ne allowe nat. or I ne preise nat pilke same resoun by whiche pat som men wenen pat þei mowen assoilen *and* vnknyttten *pe* knot of þis questioun. ¶ For certys þei seyn pat *þing* nis nat to come for pat *pe* purueaunce of god hap seyn it byforme. pat is to comen but rapþer *pe* contraria. ¶ And pat is þis pat for pat *pe* *þing* is to comen pat þefore ne may it nat ben hyd fro *pe* purueaunce of god.

4435 *al oon*—alone
4437 *harde*—hard
4445 *hap*—MS. habe
4446 *whiche*—which
4450 *wille*—wil
whiche—which pat

4451 *hap*—MS. habe
4453 *stedfast*—stydefast
4454-55 *þinge*—thing
4455 *on*—of
4456 *pilk*—thilke
4458 *whiche*—which

4459 *knot*—knotte
4461 *come*—comyn
hap—MS. habe
4464 *hyd*—MS. hydde, G.
hidde

*and in þis manere þis necessite slydiþ aȝein in to þe contrarie partie. ne it ne byhoueþ [nat] nedes þat þinges lytiden þat ben ypurueid. [but it by-houeth nedes / þat þinges þat ben to comyn ben yporueyid] but as it were ytrauailid. as who seiþ. þat þilke answerer procediþ ryȝt as þouȝ men trauailiden or weren byȝy to enqueren þe whiche þing is cause of whiche þinges. as wheþer þe prescience is cause of þe necessite of þinges to comen. or ellys þat þe necessite of þinges to comen is cause of þe purueaunce. ¶ But I ne enforce me nat now to shewen it þat þe bytydyng of þinges y-wist byforn is necessarie. how so or in what manere þat þe ordre of causes haþ it self. al þouȝ þat it ne seme nat þat þe prescience brynge in necessite of bytydyng of þinges to comen. ¶ For certys yif þat any wyȝt sitteþ it byhoueþ by necessite þat þe oppinioun be soþe of hym þat coniectiþ þat he sitteþ. and aȝeinward. al so is it of þe contrarie. yif þe oppinioun be soþe of any wyȝt for þat he sitteþ it byhoueþ by necessite þat he sitte. ¶ þan is here necessite in þat oon and in þat oper. for in þat oon is necessite of sittinge. and certys in þat oper is necessite of soþe but þerfore ne sitteþ nat a wyȝt for þat þe oppinioun of sittinge is soþe. but þe oppinioun is raper soþe for þat a wyȝt sitteþ by-forn. and þus al þouȝ þat þe cause of soþe comeþ of [þe] sytting. and nat of þe trewe oppinioun. Alȝates ȝitte is þer comune necessite in þat oon and in þat oper. ¶ þus sheweþ it þat I may make semblable skils of þe purueaunce of god and of þinges to come. ¶ For al þouȝ for þat þat þinges ben to comen. þerfore ben þei purueid. nat certys for þei ben purueid. þerfore ne bytide þei nat. ȝit naþeles byhoueþ it by necessite þat eiþer þe þinges to comen ben ypurueid of god. or ellys þat þe þinges þat ben

[* fol. 35.]

Now by this reason necessity appears to change sides. For it is not necessary that the things which are foreseen should happen, but it is necessary that the things which are to befall should be foreseen.

As if the question was, which was the cause of the other—prescience the cause of the necessity of future events, or the necessity the cause of the prescience of future events? But I will prove that, however the order of causes may stand, the event of things foreseen is necessary, although prescience doth not seem to impose a necessity upon future

things to fall out. For if a man sit—the belief in the sitting is true; and, on the other hand, if the opinion is true of his sitting, he must needs sit. In both cases there is a necessity—in the latter that the person sit—in the former, that the opinion concerning the other is true. But the man does not sit because the opinion of his sitting is true, but the opinion is true because the action of his being seated was antecedent in time. So that although the cause of truth arises from the sitting, there is a common necessity in both. Thus may we reason concerning Providence and future events.

4466 [nat]—from C.
4467-8 [but—yporueyid]—
from C.
4471 þinges—thing
4477 hap—MS. haþe
4480-82 soþe—soth

4466 soþe—sooth
4467 soþe—soth
4468 soþe—sooth
4469 soþe comeþ — sooth
comth
[þe]—from C.

4480 comune—MS. comme,
C. comune
4483 come—comyn
4484 to—omitted
4484-86 purueid—MS. pur-
ueide, C. purueyid

For allowing things are foreseen because they are to happen, and that they do not befall because they are foreseen, it is necessary that future events should be foreseen of God, or if foreseen that they should happen; and this alone is sufficient to destroy all idea of *free-will*. But it is preposterous to make the happening of temporal things the cause of eternal prescience, which we do in imagining that God foresees future events because they are to happen. And, moreover, when I know that anything exists, it is necessary for my belief that it should be. So

4513

also when I know that an event shall come to pass, it must needs happen. The event, therefore, of a thing foreseen must befall. Lastly, if a person judge a thing to be different to what it is—this is not knowledge, but a false opinion of it, and far from the true knowledge. If, therefore, a thing be so to happen that the event of it is neither necessary nor certain, how can any one foresee what is to happen? For as pure knowledge has no element in it of falsehood, so what is comprehended by true knowledge cannot be otherwise than as comprehended. Hence it is that true

purueied of god bitiden [s.] by necessite. ¶ And þis þing onoly suffiseþ I-nouȝ to distroien þe fredome of oure arbitre. þat is to seyn of oure fre wille ¶ But now [certes] shewep it wel how fer fro þe soþe and how vp so doun is þis þing þat we seyn þat þe bytydinge of temporel þinges is þe cause of þe eterne prescience. ¶ But forto wenen þat god purueiþ [the] þinges to comen. for þei ben to comen. what oper þing is it but forto wene þat pilke þinges þat bitiden som tyme ben causes of pilke souereyne purueaunce þat is in god. ¶ And her-to I adde ȝitte þis þing þat ryȝt as whan þat I woot þat o þing is it byhouep by necessite þat pilke self þing be. and eke þat whan I haue knowe þat any þinge shal bitiden so byhouep it by necessite þat pilk[e] same þing bytida. so folweþ it þan þat þe bytydyng of þe þinge Iwist by-forn ne may nat ben eschewed. ¶ And at þe last[e] yif þat any wyȝt wone a þing to ben oper weyes þan it is. it nys nat onoly vnsience. but it is deceiuable oppinioun ful diuerse and for fro þe soþe of science. ¶ wherfore yif any þing be so to comen so þat þe bytydyng of it ne be nat certeyne ne necessaria. ¶ who may weten [byforn] þat pilke þing is to come. ¶ For ryȝt as science ne may nat be medelyd wiþ falsnesse. as who seiþ þat yif I woot a þing. it ne may nat be fals þat I ne woot it. ¶ Ryȝt so pilk þing þat is conceyued by science ne may [nat] ben noon oper weyes þan [as] it is conceiued. For þat is þe cause whi þat science wantiþ lesyng. as who seiþ. whi þat wityng ne receyueþ nat lesyng of þat it woot. ¶ For it byhouep by necessite þat euery þinge [be] ryȝt as science comprehendip it to be. what shal I þan sein. ¶ In whiche manere knoweþ god byforn þe þinges to comen.

4498 [s.]—from C.
4499 *fredome*—freedom
4500 *wille*—will
4501 [certes]—from C.
4504 *purueiþ*—MS. *purueiþe*
[the]—from C.
4500 *bitiden*—bytydden
som tyme—whilom

4509 o—a
self—selue
4510 *þinge*—thing
4511 *pilk[e]*—thilke
4513 *þinge*—thing
4514 *last[e]*—lasto
4515 *nys*—is
4518 *it*—hit

4519 [byforn]—from C.
4522 *fals*—false
4523 [nat]—from C.
ben—MS. by. C. ben
4524 þan [as] it is—MS. þan
it is be
4527 [he]—from C.
4520 *whiche*—which

¶ yif þei ne be nat certeyne. ¶ For yif þat he deme þat þei ben to comen vneshewably. *and* so may be þat it is possible þat þei ne shullen *nat comen. god is desseiued. but nat only to trowen þat god is desseiued. but for to speke it wiþ mouþe it is a felonous synne.

¶ But yif þat god woot þat ryȝt so as þinges ben to comen. so shulle þei comen. so þat he wit[*e*] egaly. as who seiþ indifferently. þat þinges mowen ben don or ellys nat don. what is pilke prescience þat ne comprehendþ no certeyne þinge ne stable. or ellys what difference is þer bytwixe þe prescience. *and* pilke iape-worþi dyuynynge of Tiresie þe diuinour þat seide. ¶ Al þat I seie quod he eyþer it shal be. or ellys it ne shal nat be. Or ellis how moche is worþe þe diuyn prescience more þan þe oppinioun of mankynde yif so be þat it demerþ þe þinges vncerteyne as men don. of þe whiche domes of men þe bytydyng nis nat certeyne. ¶ But yif so be þat noon vncerteyne þinge may ben in hym þat is ryȝt certeyne welle of alle þinges. þan is þe bytydyng certeyne of pilke þinges whiche he haþ wist byforn fermely to comen. For whiche it folweþ þat þe fredom of þe conseylls *and* of þe werkes of mankynde nis non syn þat þe pouȝt of god seep alle þinges with outen errour of falsnesse byndeþ *and* constreiniþ hem to a bitidyng by necessite. *and* yif [this] þing be on-is grauntid *and* receyued. þat is to seyn. þat þer nis no fre wille. þan sheweþ it wel how gret distruccioun *and* how grete damages þer folwen of þinges of mankynde. ¶ For in ydel ben þer þan purposed *and* byhyȝt medes of goode folk. *and* peynes to badde folk. syn þat no moeuynge of free corage uoluntarie ne haþ nat deserued hem. þat is to seyn neiþer mede nor peyne. ¶ And it sholde seme þan þat pilke þinge is alþer worste whiche

knowledge cannot; err, because everything must precisely be what true knowledge [** Col. 33 b.*] perceives it to be. What follows, then?

4534

How does God foreknow those uncertain contingencies? For if he thinks that a thing will inevitably happen, which possibly may not, he is deceived—but this is sheer blasphemy.

4540

But if God discerns that just as things are to come they shall come; if he knows that they may or may not come, what sort of prescience is this, which comprehends nothing certain, nothing invariable? Or how does divine prescience differ from human opinion, if he hath an uncertain judgment of things, whereof the events are uncertain and unfixed?

4551

But if there can be no uncertainty in his knowledge, who is the source of all certainty; the event of all things which he foreknows must be fixed and inevitable.

Whence it follows that men have no freedom in their designs and actions; because the Divine Mind, endowed with an infallible foresight, constrains and binds them to a certain event.

4562

4534 mouþe—Mowth

4536 shulle—shullyn

wit[*e*]=wite

4538 don—MS. done, C. y-

doon

4543 moche—mocheſ

4543 worþe—worth

4549 haþ—MS. haþe

4550 whiche—which

4551 mankynde—man-kynd

4551 [this]—from C.

4555 grauntid—ygrauntid

4558 medes of—Meedes to

4560 haþ—MS. haþe

4562 alþer worste whiche—

alderworst which

Rewards and punishments now deemed just and equitable, will be considered most unjust, when, it is allowed, that mankind are not prompted by any will of their own, to either virtue or vice, but in all their actions are impelled by a fatal necessity.

4570

Nor would there be such things as virtue or vice, but such a medley of the one and the other as would be productive of the greatest confusion. And from this it will follow—that since all order comes of Divine Providence, and that there is no freedom of the human will, that also our vices must be referred to the author of all good—which is a most impious opinion. Then is it useless to hope for anything from God, or to pray to him. For why should men do either, when all they can desire is irreversibly predestined? Hope and prayer being thus ineffectual, all intercourse is cut off between God and man.

4588

By reverent and humble supplication we earn divine grace, a most inestimable favour, and are able to associate with the Deity, and to unite ourselves to the inaccessible light.

þat is nowe demed. for alþer moste iuste and moste ryztful. þat is to seyn þat shrewes ben punyssed. or ellys þat good[e] folk ben ygerdoned. þe whiche folk syn þat þe propre wille [ne] sent hem nat to þat oon ne to þat oþer. þat is to seyn. neþer to good[e] ne to harme. but constreineþ hem certeyne necessite of þinges to comen. ¶ þanne ne shollen þer neuer ben ne neuer weren vice ne vertue. but it sholde rapen ben confusioun of alle desertes medlid wiþoute discreсион. ¶ And zitte þer folweþ an oþer inconuenient of þe whiche þer ne may ben þouzt ne more felonous ne more wikke. and þat is þis þat so as þe ordre of þinges is yledd and comeþ of þe purueaunce of god. ne þat no þing nis leueful to þe conсеils of mankynde. as who seiþ þat men han no power to done no þing. ne wilne no þing. þan folweþ it þat oure vices ben refferred to þe mak[er]e of alle good. as who seiþ þan folweþ it. þat god auzt[e] han þe blame of oure vices. syn he constreiniþ by necessite to don vices. þan nis þer no resoun to han hopen in god. ne forto preien to god. ¶ For what sholde any wyzt hopen to god. or whi sholde he preien to god. syn þat þe ordenaunce of destine whiche þat ne may nat ben enclined. knytteþ and streiniþ alle þinges þat men may desiren. ¶ þan sholde þere be don away pilke oonly alliaunce bytwixen god and men. þat is to seien to hopen and to preien. but by þe preis of ryztfulnesse and of veray mekenesse we deserue þe gerdoun of þe deuyne grace whiche þat is inestimable. þat is to sein þat it is so grete þat it ne may nat ben ful ypreised. and þis is oonly þe manere. þat is to seyen hope and prayeres. for whiche it semeþ þat [men] mowen speken

4563 *nowe*—MS. *newe*, C. *now*
alþer moste iuste—alder
moost iust
moste—most
4566-67 *good[e]*—goode
4566 *wille*—wil
[ne]—from C.
4571 *wiþoute*—with-owten
4573 *þouzt*—thoght

4574 *yledd*—MS. *yledde*, C.
yled
4575 *comeþ*—comth
4577 *done*—doon
4578 *mak[er]e*—makers
4579 *auzt[e]*—owhte
4584 *whiche*—which
4588 *preis*—prys
ryztfulnesse—Rihtwesse-

nesse
4589 *deserue*—deseruyne
4590 *deuyne*—MS. *deuynee*,
C. *dyuyne*
4590-93 *whiche*—which
4591 *grete*—gret
4593 [men]—from C.
speken—speke

wip god. *and* by resoun of supplicacioun ben conioigned to pilk clernesse þat nis nat approached no raper or þat men hyseken it *and* emprenten it. And yif men ne wene [nat] þat [hope] ne preiers ne han no strengþes. by þe necessite of þinges to comen y-reseuiued. what þing is þer þan by whiche we mowen be conioigned *and* clyuen to pilke souereyne prince of þinges. ¶ For whiche it byhoueþ by necessite þat þe lynage of man-kynde as *þou songe a litel here byforne ben departed *and* vnoigned from hys welle *and* faylen of hys bygynnyng. þat is to seien god.

If men believe that hope and prayer have no power because of the necessity of future events, by what other way can we be united, and hold fast to the sovereign Lord of all things? 4599

Wherefore mankind must be discovered and dis-united from the source of its ex- [* fol. 36.] istence, and shrink from its beginning.

4604

QUE NAM DISCORS

What discordable cause haþ to-rent *and* vnoigned þe byndyng or þe alliaunce of þinges. þat is to seyne þe coniunccioun of god *and* of man. ¶ whiche god haþ established so grete bataile bitwixen þise two soþefast or verray þinges. þat is to sein bytwixen þe purueaunce of god *and* fre wille. þat þei ben synguler *and* diuided. ne þat þei ne wolen nat ben medeled ne coupled to-gidre. but þer nis no discorde to [tho] verray þinges. but þei cleuen certeyne al wey to hem self. but þe þouzt of man confounded *and* ouerprowen by þe dirke membris of þe body ne may nat by fir of his dirk[ed] lokyng. þat is to seyn by þe vigour of hys insyzt while þe soule is in þe body knowen þe pinne subtil knytinges of þinges. ¶ But wherfore eschaufþ it so by so grete loue to fynden pilke note[s] of soþey-couered. (*glosa*) þat is to sein wherfore eschaufþ þe þouzt of man by so grete desir to knowen pilke notificaciouns þat ben yhid vndir þe couertours of soþe. woot it ouzt pilke þinges

[The 34. Metur.] Say what discordant cause looses the bonds of things? 4607

What power doth make these two great truths (i. e. Providence and Free-will) contend, which when separate are plain and clear, but united appear dark and perplexed? 4613

The mind of man encumbered by the earthly body, can never, with her cloudy sight, discover the subtle and close bonds of things. 4617

But why does man burn with ardour to learn the hidden notes of truth? Why gropes he for he knows not what? None seek to know what is known.

4595 *pilk*—thilke
4596 *emprenten*—impetrent
4597 [*nat*]—from C.
[*hope*]—from C.
4601 *whiche*—which
4602 *byforne*—by-for
4605 *hap*—MS. hape
4606 *seyne*—seyn
4607 *whiche*—which

4606 *hap*—MS. hape
grete—gret
soþefast—soothfast
4610 *scille*—wil
4612 *discorde*—discord
[*tho*]—from C.
4613 *cleuen*—clyuen
4615 *dirk[ed]*—derkyd
4616 *while*—whil

4617 *known*—knowe
4619-21 *grete*—gret
note[s]—notes
4619 *soþe*—soth
4621 *yhid*—MS. yhidde, C.
lyd
4623 *soþe*—sooth
þinges—thing

If he knows
them not, what
does he so blindly
seek?

Who wishes for
things he hath
never known?
Or if he seek,
where shall he
find them?
Or if he find, how
shall he be sure
that he has found
what he sought
for? The pure
soul that sees the
divine thought,
knows all the
secret chains of
things.

Yet, though now
hidden in its
fleshy members,
it hath some re-
membrance of its
pure state—it re-
tains the sums of
things, but has
lost their partic-
ulars. He who
seeks truth is not
in either circum-
stance (i.e. seek-
ing for what he
knows or knows
not), he knoweth
not all things,
nor hath he
wholly forgotten
all.

But he ponders
on what he
knows, that he
may add those
things that he
hath forgotten to
those that he
retains.

4625 [Glosa]—from C.
4630 *pinge*—thing
4630 *whiche*—which
4631 *woot*—not
4631 *nat*—nawht
4632 *coupe*—kowde
4634 [pat]—from C.
4634 *where*—wher

pat it anguissous desirēþ to knowe. as who seiþ nay.
¶ For no man ne trauaileþ forto witen pinges þat he woot.

4625 and perfore þe texte seiþ þus. ¶ [Glosa] Si enim anima
ignorat istas subtiles connexiones. responde. unde est
quod desiderat scire cum nil ignotum possit desiderare.

¶ But who traua[i]leþ to wyten pinges y-knowe. and yif
þat he ne knoweþ hem nat. what sekēþ pilke blynde
þouȝt. what is he þat desirēþ any pinge of whiche he
woot ryȝt nat. as who seiþ who so desirēþ any ping
nedis som what he knoweþ of it. or ellys he ne coupe

4633 nat desire it. or who may folwen pinges þat ne ben nat
ywist ¶ and þouȝ [pat] he seke þo pinges where shal
he fynden hem. what wyȝt þat is al vnknowynge and
ignoraunt may knowe þe forme þat is yfounded. ¶ But
whan þe soule byholdeþ and seep þe heye þouȝt. þat is
to seyn god. þan knoweþ it to-gidre þe somme and þe
singularites. þat is to seyn þe principles and eueryche
by hym self. ¶ But now while þe soule is hidd in þe
cloude and in þe derknesse of þe membris of þe body.
it ne haþ nat al forȝeten it selfe. but it wiþholdeþ þe

4643 somme of pinges and lesēþ þe singularites. þan who so
þat sekeþ sopenesse. he nis in neiper noupir habit. for
he not nat alle ne he ne haþ nat alle forȝeten. ¶ But
ȝitte hym remembriþ þe somme of pinges þat he wiþ-
holdeþ and axeþ counseil and tretēþ depelyche pinges
ysein byforne. [Glosa] þat is to sein þe grete somme in
hys mynde. [textus] so þat he mowe adden þe parties
þat he haþ forȝeten. to pilke þat he haþ wiþholden.

4635 *what*—MS. þat, C. what
4635 *vnknowynge*—vunkunynge
4639 *eueryche*—euerych
4640 *whilo*—whil
4640 *þe*—MS. þe þe
4641 *hidd*—MS. hidde, C. hidde
4641 *derknesse*—derkenesse
4642 *haþ*—MS. haþe

selfe—self
4644 *noupir habit*—nother
4644 *habite*
4645 *alle (both)*—al
4645 *haþ*—MS. haþe
4648 [Glosa]—from C.
4649 [textus]—from C.
4650 *haþ (both)*—MS. haþe

TAMEN ILLA UETUS INQUIT HEC EST.

Panne seide she. þis is quod she þe olde questioun of þe purueaunce of god. and marcus tulius whan he denided[e] þe deuinaciouns. þat is to sein in hys booke þat he wroot of deuinaciouns. he moeued[e] gretly þis questioun. and þou þi self hast souzt it mochel and outerly and long[e]. but zit ne haþ it nat ben determined ne yspedd fermely and diligently of any of yow. ¶ And þe cause of þis derkenesse and [of this] difficulte is for þat þe moeuyng of þe resoun of mankynde ne may nat moeuen to. þat is to sein applien or ioynen to þe simplicité of þe deuyne prescience. ¶ þe whiche symplicité of þe deuyne prescience zif þat men [myhten thinken it in any manere / þat is to seyn / þat yif men] myzte þinken and comprehend þe þinges as god seep hem. þan ne sholde þer dwellen outerly no doute. þe whiche resoun and cause of difficulte I shal assaie at þe laste to shewen and to speden. ¶ whan I haue *firste [yspendyd / and] answered to þo resouns by whiche þou art ymoewed. ¶ For I axe whi þou wenest þat þilk[e] resouns of hem þat assoilen þis questioun ne ben nat spedeful ynouz ne sufficient þe whiche solucioun or þe whiche resoun for þat it demyþ þat þe prescience nis nat cause of necessite to þinges to comen. þan ne wenep it nat þat fredom of wille be distourbed or ylett by prescience. for ne drawest þou nat argumentes from ellys where of þe necessite of þinges to comen. As who seip any oþer wey þan þus. but þat þilke þinge[s] þat þe prescience woot byforn [ne] mowen nat vnbitide. þat is to seyn þat þei moten bitide. ¶ But þan yif þat prescience ne putteþ no necessite to þinges to comen. as þou þi self

[The 4th prose.]
P. This is the old objection against Providence, so ably handled by Cicero in his *Book of Divination*; and you yourself have anxiously dis-

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cussed it. But neither of you have offered a satisfactory solution of the difficulty.

The cause of this mystery is that the human understanding cannot conceive the simplicity of the divine prescience, for if it were possible to comprehend this, every difficulty would at once disappear. I shall, therefore, try to explain and solve this difficult

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question. I ask, then, why you do not approve the

[* fol. 36 b.] reasoning of such as think—that Prescience does not obstruct the liberty of the will, because it is not the necessitating cause of future events? Do you draw an argument of the necessity of future events, from any other topic than this,—that those things which are foreknown must

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of necessity happen? If divine prescience imposes no necessity upon future things, must not the issue of things be voluntary, and man's will free and unconstrained?

4653 *denided[e]*—deunyede
booke—book
4654 *moewed[e]*—moeuede
4655 *souzt*—I. souht
4656 *long[e]*—longe
4657 *haþ*—MS. haþe
4657 *yspedd*—MS. yspedde.
C. Isped
fermely—MS. feruently,

C. fermely
4659 *derkenesse*—dirkenesse
[of this]—from C.
4662-3 [myhten — men]—
from C.
4663 *myzte*—myhten
4667 *firste*—fyrst
4668 [yspendyd and]—from
C.

4668 *þo*—the
whiche—which
4669 *art*—MS. arte
þilk[e]—þilke
4671 *spedful*—spedful
4672 *whiche*—which
4674 *wille*—wyl
4677 *þinge[s]*—þingcs

For argument sake let us suppose there is no prescience, would then, the events which proceed from free-will alone be under the power of necessity?

R. No.
P. Let us, then, admit Prescience, but that it imposes no necessity on what is to happen; the freedom of the will would still remain entire and absolute. But although Prescience, you may say, is not the necessary cause of future events, yet it is a sign that they shall necessarily happen, and hence it follows that, although there

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were no prescience, future events would still be an inevitable necessity. For the sign of a thing is not really the thing itself, but only points out what the individual is. Wherefore, it must be first proved that everything happens by necessity before we can conclude that prescience is a sign of that necessity. For if there be no necessity, prescience cannot be the sign of that which has no existence. The assertion that nothing happens but by necessity, must be proved by arguments drawn from causes connected and agreeing with this necessity, and not from signs or foreign causes.

hast confessed it *and* byknown a litel her byforne. ¶ what cause [or what] is it. as who seiþ þere may no cause be. by whiche þat þe endes (exitus) uoluntarie of þinges myȝten be constreyned to certeyne bitydyng. ¶ For by grace of possessioun. so þat þou mowe þe better vnderstonde þis þat folweþ. ¶ I pose (impossibile) þat þer ne be no prescience. þan axe I quod she in as moche as appertenip to þat. sholde þan þinges þat comen of frewille ben constreined to bytiden by necessite. Boicius. nay quod I. þan aȝeinward quod she. I suppose þat þere be prescience. but þat ne putteþ no necessite to þinges. þan trowe I þat þilk self freedom of wille shal dwellen al hool *and* absolut *and* vnbounen. but þou wolt sein þat al be it so þat prescience nis nat cause of þe necessite of bitydyng to þinges to comen. ¶ Algate ȝitte it is a signe þat þe þinges ben to bytiden by necessite. by þis manere þan al þouȝ þe prescience ne hadde neuer yben. ȝit algate or at þe lest[e] wey. it is certeyne þing þat þe endys *and* þe bitydynges of þinges to comen sholde ben necessarie. ¶ For euery sygne sheweþ *and* signifieþ oonly what þe þing is ¶ but it ne makip nat þe þing þat it signifieþ. ¶ For whiche it byhoueþ firste to shewen þat no þing ne bitidip [þat it ne bytydith] by necessite. so þat it may apere þat þe prescience is signe of þis necessite ¶ or ellys yif þere nere no necessite. certys þilke prescience ne myȝt[e] nat ben signe of þinge þat nis nat. ¶ But certys it is nowe certeyne þat þe preue of þis sustenip by stedfast resoun ne shal nat ben ladd ne proued by signes ne by argumentys ytaken fro wiþ oute. but by causes couenable *and* necessarie ¶ But þou mayst sein how may it be þat þe þinges ne bitiden nat

4683 *whiche*—which
46-5 *better*—betere
46-38 *moche*—mochel
46-9 *frewille*—free wyl
4601 *þat no*—þat is ne
4603 *þat*—MS. þan
þilk self—þilke selue

4683 *wille*—wyl
4696 *lest[e]*—locate
4700 *sholde*—sholden
4703 *whiche*—which
4704 *frate*—fyrat
4704 [þat — *bytydith*] —
from C.

4707 *myȝt[e]*—myhte
þinge—thing
4703 *nowe*—now
4708 *sustenip*—ysustenyd
stedfast—styddefast
ladd—MS. laddo. C. led

pat ben ypurueyed to comen. but certys ryzt as we trowen pat þo pinges whiche þat þe purueaunce woot by-forn to comen. ne ben nat to bitiden. but [pat] ne sholde we nat demen. but raper al pouz [pat] þei schal bitiden. zit ne haue þei no necessite of hire kynde to bitiden. and pis maist þou lyztly aperceyuen by þis pat I shal seyn. but we seen many pinges whan þei ben don by-forn oure eyen ryzt as men seen þe karter werken in þe tournynge and in attempryng or in adressyng of hys kartes or chariottes. ¶ and by þis manere as who seiþ mayst þou vnderstonde of alle manere opir werkemen. ¶ Is þere þanne any necessite as who seiþ in oure lokynge [pat] constreineþ or compelliþ any of þilke pinges to ben don so. b. nay quod I ¶ For in ydel and in veyne were alle þe effect of crafte yif pat alle pinges weren moeued by constreynynge. þat is to seyn by constreynynge of oure eyen or of oure syzt. P. þise pingus þan quod she þat whan men don hem ne han non necessite pat men don hem. eke þo same pinges first or þei be don. þei ben to comen wiþ out necessite. for whi þer ben somme pinges to bytide of whiche þe endys and þe bitidynge of hem ben absolut *and quit of alle necessite. for certys I ne trowe nat pat any man wolde seyn þis. pat þo pinges pat men don now pat þei ne weren to bitiden. first or þei were ydon ¶ and þilk same pinges al pouz pat men hadden ywyst hem by-forn. zitte þei han fre bitidynge. for ryzt as science of pinges present ne bryngeþ in no necessite to pinges [pat men doon // Ryht so the prescience of thinges to comen ne bryngeth in no necessite to thinges] to bytiden but þou mayst seyn pat of þilke same it is ydouted. as wheþer pat of þilke pinges pat ne han non endes and

We see many things when they are done before our eyes; such as a charioteer driving his chariot, and other things of like nature. Now, is there any necessity which compels these things to be done? B. No. For if all things were moved by compulsion—the efforts of art would be vain and fruitless.

P. The things, then, which are done are under no necessity that they should be done; then first before they were done, they were under no necessity of coming to pass; wherefore some things happen, the event of which is unconstrained by necessity. These things therefore, although fore-known, have free events: for as the knowledge

4731 of present things imposes no necessity upon things which are now done, so

[* fol. 37.] neither does the foreknowledge of futurities necessitate the things which are to come. But you may doubt whether there can be any certain prescience of things, of which the event is not necessitated: for here there seems to be an evident contradiction. If things are fore-known, you may contend they must necessarily happen; and if their event is not necessary,

4714 *whiche*—which

4715 [pat]—from C.

sholde—sholden

4716 *demen*—MS. denyen

[pat]—from C.

4717 *necessite*—MS. necessi-4721 *hys*—hise

[tes]

4725 [pat]—from C.

4727 *veyne*—veyn

alle—al

4728 *crafte*—craft (the4729 *þise*—MS. þise þise, C.4732 *wiþ out*—with-owte4733 *bytide*—bytyden4733 *whiche*—which4737 *were*—weeren [I-doon

ydon — MS. ydone, C.

þilk—þilko

4741.2 [pat — thinges] —

from C.

4744 *endes*—issues

they cannot be foreseen, because true knowledge can comprehend nothing but what is absolutely certain. And if things uncertain in their events are foreseen as certain, this knowledge is nothing more than a false opinion. For it is very remote from true knowledge to judge of things otherwise than they really are. The cause of this error is that men imagine that their knowledge is wholly derived from the nature of the things known, whereas it is quite the reverse. Things are not known from their inherent properties, but by the faculties of the observer.

4761

The roundness of a body affects the sight in one way, and the touch in another. The eye, from afar, darts its rays upon the object, and by beholding it comprehends its form. But the object is not distinguished by the touch unless the hand comes in contact with it and feels it all round. Man himself is surveyed in divers ways—by the senses, by the imagination, by reason, and by the intelligence (of the Deity). The senses take note of his material figure—the imagination considers the form alone, exclusive of the matter.

bytidynges necessaryes yif þer-of may ben any pre-science ¶ For certys þei seme to discorda. for þou wenest þat yif þat þinges ben yseyn byforn þat necessite folweþ hem. and yif (*et putas*) necessite faileþ hem þei ne myzten nat ben wist byforn. and þat no þinge ne may ben comprehendid by science but certeyne. and yif þo þinges þat ne han no certeyne bytidynges ben ypurueied as certeyn. it sholde ben dirkenesse of oppinioun nat soþefastnesse of science [*and þou weenyest þat it be diuerse fro the hoolnesse of science / þat any man sholde deme a thing to ben oother weys thanne it is it self*]. and þe cause of þis errour is. þat of alle þe þinges þat euery wyzt haþ yknowe. þei wenen þat þo þinges ben y-knowe al only by þe strengþe and by þe nature of þe þinges þat ben ywyst or yknowe. and it is al þe contrarie. for alle þat euere is yknowe. it is rap̃er c̃mprehendid and yknowen nat after his strengþe and hys nature. but after þe faculte þat is to seyn þe power and [the] nature of hem þat knowen. and for þat þis shal mowe shewen by a short ensample þe same roundenes of a body .O. oþer weyes þe syzt of þe eye knoweþ it. and oþer weyes þe touchyng. þe lokyng by castyng of his bemes waiteþ and seep fro afer alle þe body to-gider wiþ oute mouyng of it self. but þe touchyng cliuiþ and conioigneþ to þe rounde body (*orbi*) and moueþ abouten þe environyng. and comprehendip by parties þe roundenesse. ¶ and þe man hym self oþer weies wyt byholdip hym. and oþerweyes ymaginacioun and oþer weyes resoun. and oþer weyes intelligence. ¶ For þe wit comprehendip fro wiþ outen furþe þe figure of þe body of þe man. þat is establissed in þe matere subiect. But þe ymaginacioun [comprehendith only the figure with owte the matere /

4746 seme—semyn
4749 discorda—discorden
4749 þat—yif
4753-5 [*and*—*sof*]—from C.
4757 haþ—MS. haþe
4760 alle—al

4763 mowe—mowen
4764 roundenes — Rownd-
 nesse
4765 syzt—sihte
4767 alle—al
4769 abouten—abowte.
4770 roundenesse — Rownd-

ness
4774 fro wiþ outen furþe—
 with owte forth
4776-7 [*comprehendith*—
 ymaginacioun]*—*from C.

Resoun surmounteth ymaginacioun] and comprehendē by an vniuersel lokynge þe commune spece (speciem) þat is in þe singuler peces. ¶ But þe eye of intelligence is heyzer for it surmounteth þe enviroynynge of þe vniuersite and lookeþ ouer þat by pure subtilite of þouzt. þilk same symple forme of man þat is perdurably in þe deuyne þouzt. in whiche þis auzt[e] gretely to ben considered þat þe heyest strengþe to comprehendē þinges enbraceþ and conteynē þe lower[e] strengþe [but the lower strengthe ne arysith nat in no manere to heyere strengthe]. for wit ne may no þinge comprehendē oute of matere. ne þe ymaginacioun ne lokeþ nat þe vniuersel peces. ne resoun ne takeþ nat þe symple forme. so as intelligence takeþ it. but þe intelligence þat lokeþ al abouen whan it haþ comprehendid þe forme it knowē and demē alle þe þinges þat ben vndir þat forme. but she knowē hem vndir þilke manere in þe whiche it comprehendē þilke same symple forme þat ne may neuer be knowen to non of þat oper. þat is to seyn to non of þo þre forseide strengþes of þe soule. for it knowē þe vniuersite of resoun and þe figure of þe ymaginacioun. and þe sensible material conueined. and þou wenest þat it be diuerse fro þe hoolnesse of science. þat any man sholde deme a þing to ben operweyes þan it is it self and þe cause of þis errour etc. *ut supra*. by wit. ne it ne vseþ nat nor of resoun ne of ymaginacioun ne of wit wiþ oute forþe but it byholdeþ alle þinges so as I shal seye. by a strok of þouzt formely wiþ oute discours or collacioun ¶ Certys resoun whan it lokeþ any þing vniuersel it ne vseþ nat of ymaginacioun nor of wit and algates ȝit [it] comprehendē þe þinges ymaginable and sensible. for resoun is she þat *diffinisēþ þe vniuersel

Reason transcends the imaginations, and examining existences in general discovers the particular species; but the eye of Intelligence soars still higher; for, going beyond the bounds of what is general, it surveys the simple forms themselves, by its own pure and subtle thought: in which this is chiefly to be considered, that the higher power of perception embraces the lower; but the inferior cannot attain to the energy of the superior: for the senses cannot go beyond the perception of matter; the imagination cannot comprehend existences in general, nor can the reason conceive the simple form. But the Intelligence looking down (as from

4794 above) and having conceived the form, discerns all things that are below it, and comprehends what does not fall within the reach of the other faculties of the mind. Without the aid of those faculties Intelligence comprehends things formally (i.e. by beholding their simple forms) by one effort of mind. Reason, without the aid of imagination and sense, in considering things in general, comprehends all imaginable and sensible things. For instance, reason defines her general conceptions thus:—

(* fol. 37 b.)

4777 comprehendē — MS.
comprehendynge
4778 an—omitted
4780 heyzer—heyere
4783 whiche—which
auzt[e]—owhte
4784 heyest—heyiste

4785 lower[e]—lowers
4786-7 [but — strengthe]—
from C.
4787 wit—witte
oute—owt
4791 hap—MS. haþe
4793 whiche—which

4798-6 non—none
4798 strengþes—þinges
4798-4801 and þou—*ut supra*—omitted
4806 collacioun—MS. callacioun, C. collacioun
4806 wit—witte

Man is a rational two-footed animal, which, though it be a general idea, yet every one knows that man thus defined is perceived both by the imagination and the senses, notwithstanding that in this instance reason does not make use of imagination or the senses, but of her own rational conception. The imagination also, although it derives its power of seeing and forming figures from the senses, yet in the absence and without the use of the senses it considers and comprehends all sensible things by its own imaginative power. Do not you see that

4824

men attain to the knowledge of things more by their own faculties, than by the inherent property of things?

[The 4th Metaph.] Nor is it unreasonable that it should be so—for since every judgment is the act of the person judging; every one must needs do his own work by the help of his own faculties, and not by the aid of foreign power. Fallacious and obscure was the lore of the scribes, who taught that images of things obvious to the senses were imprinted on the mind by external objects, and that the soul is at first like a mirror or a clean parchment, free from figures and letters.

of hir conseite ryzt þus. ¶ Man is a resonable t[w]o-footid beest. and how so þat þis knowynge [is] vniuersel. ȝit nys þer no wyzt þat ne woot wel. þat a man is [a thing] ymaginable and sensible ¶ and þis same considereþ wel resoun. but þat nis nat by ymaginacioun. nor by witte. but it lokip it by [a] resonable concepcioun. ¶ Also ymaginacioun al be it so. þat it takeþ of wit þe bygynyngus to seen and to formen þe figures. algates al þouȝ þat wit ne ware not present. ȝit it envirounip and comprehendip alle þinges sensible. nat by resoun sensible of demynge. but by resoun ymaginatif. ¶ sest þou nat þan þat alle þe þinges in knowynge vsen more of hir faculte or of hir power. þan þei don of [the] faculte or of power of þinges þat ben yknowen. ne þat nis no wronge. for so as euery iugement is þe dede or þe doynge of hym þat demeþ. It byhoueþ þat euery wyzt performe þe werke and hys entencioun nat of forein power: but of hys propre power.

QUONDAM PORTICUS ATTULIT.

þE porche þat is to sein a gate of þe toune of athenis þer as philosophres hadde hir congregacioun to dispoiten. and pilke porche brouzt[e] somtyme olde men ful derke in hire sentences. þat is to sein philosophers þat hyztenstoiciens. þat wenden þat ymages [and] sensibilites þat is to sein sensible ymaginaciouns. or ellys ymaginacioun of sensible þinges weren inprentid in to soules fro bodies wiþ oute forþe. ¶ As who seiþ þat pilke stoiciens wenden þat þe soule hadde ben naked of it self. as a mirour or a clene parchemyn. so þat alle figures mosten [fyrst] comen fro þinges fro wiþ oute in to soules. and ben inprentid in to soules. *Textus.* Ryzt as we ben wont some tyme by a swift poyntel to ficchen lettres emprentid in þe smopenesse or in þe plainesse of

4810 [is]—from C.

4813 witte—wit

4821 don—MS. done, C. doon

[the]—from C.

4823 yknowen—Ikuowe

4823 no wronge—nat wrong

4824 werke—werk

4825 forein—foreyne

4827 hadde—hadden
dispoiten—desputen

4828 brouzt[e]—browhte

4830 [and]—from C.

4837 inprentid—aprentyd

4838 some tyme—somytyme
swifl—swyfte

þe table of wex. or in parchemyn þat ne haþ no figure [ne] note in it. *Glosa.* But now arguiþ boece azeins þat oppinioun and seiþ þus. but yif þe þriuyng soule ne vnplitiþ no þing. þat is to sein ne doþ no þing by hys propre moeuynge. but suffriþ and lieþ subgit to þe figures and to þe notes of bodyes wiþ oute forþe. and zeldeþ ymages ydel and veyne in þe manere of a mirour. whennes þriueþ þan or whennes comeþ þan pilke knowyng in oure soule. þat discerniþ and byholdeþ alle þinges. and whennes is pilke strengþe þat byholdeþ þe syngulere þinges. or whennes is þe strengþe þat dyuydeþ þinges yknowe. and pilke strengþe þat gadereþ to-gidre þe þinges deuided. and þe strengþe þat cheseþ hys entrechaunged wey. for soþn tyme it heueþ vp þe heued. þat is to sein þat it heueþ vp þe entercioun to ryzt heye þinges. and som tyme it discendiþ in to ryzt lowe þinges. and whan it retourniþ in to hym self. it repreuiþ and destroiþ þe false þinges by þe trewe þinges. ¶ Certys þis strengþe is cause more efficient and mochel more myzty to seen and to knowe þinges. þan pilke cause þat suffriþ and reseceyueþ þe notes and þe figures impressed in manere of matere al-gates þe passioun þat is to seyn þe suffraunce or þe wit in þe quik[e] body goþ byforne excitynge and moeu- yng þe strengþes of þe þouzte. ryzt so as whan þat clerenesse smyteþ þe eyen and moeuiþ hem to seen. or ryzt so as voys or sounne hurtliþ to þe eres and com- moeuiþ hem to herkne. þan is þe strengþe of þe þouzt ymoeuidd and excitidd and clepeþ furþe þe semblable moeuyngeþ þe spesces þat it halt wiþ inne it self. and addiþ þo spesces to þe notes and to þe þinges wiþ out forþe. and medeleþ þe ymages of þinges wiþ out forþe to þe forme[s] yhid wiþ inne hym self.

But if the mind is passive in receiv- ing the impres- sions of outward objects, whence proceeds the knowledge by which the mind comprehends all things?

4845

Whence its force to conceive indi- vidual existences, to separate those things when known, to unite divided things, and to choose and change its path, soaring to the highest and de- scending to the lowest things— and returning to itself, to confute false things by the true?

4854

This cause is more efficacious and powerful to see and to know things, than that cause which re- ceives the cha- racters impressed like servile matter.

4860

Yet the sense in the living body excites and moves the mental powers; as when the light striking the eyes causes them to see, or as the voice rushing into the ear ex- cites hearing.

4866

Then is the force of thought ex- cited; it calls forth the images within itself, and adds to them the outward forms, blending external images with the counterparts concealed within.

4872

4840 *hap*—MS. *habe*
4843 *vnplitiþ*—vnpleyteth
doþ—MS. *doþe*
4845 *þe*—*tho*
4853 *quik[e]*—*qwyke*

4863 *goþ*—MS. *goþe*
4864 *þouzte*—thought
4865 *clerenesse*—cleeruesse
4866 *sounne*—sown
4868 *furþe*—forth

4870 *out*—owte
4871 *out forþe*—owte forth
4872 *forme[s]*—formes
yhid—I-middle

QUOD SI IN CORPORIBUS SENCIENTIS.

[* fol. 38.]

*QUESTIO.

[The 5th prose.]
Although there
are in objects
certain qualities
which strike ex-
ternally upon the
senses, and put
their instruments
in motion; al-
though the pas-
sive impression
upon the body
precedes the ac-
tion of the mind,
and although the
former rouses the
latter to action,
yet if in the per-
ception of bodily
things, the soul
is not by the im-
pression of ex-
ternal things
made to know
these things, but
by its own power
judgeth of these
bodily impres-

sions, how much
more shall those
pure spiritual
beings (as God or
angels) discern
things by an act
of their under-
standing alone,
without the aid of
impressions from
external objects?
For this reason,
then, there are
several sorts of
knowing distrib-
uted among
various beings.
For sense (or
sensation) desti-
tute of all other
knowledge is
allotted to those
creatures that
have no motion,
as shell-fish. But
imagination is
given to such
brutes capable of
motion, and hav-
ing in some degree
the power of de-
siring or refusing.
Reason, however,
is the attribute
of man alone, as
Intelligence is
that of God.

But what [yif] pat in bodies to ben feelid pat is
to sein in þe takynge of knoweleching of bodyly
þinges. and al be it so þat þe qualites of bodies þat ben
obiet fro wiþ oute forþe moeuen and entalenten þe in-
strumentes of þe wittes. and al be it so þat þe passioun
of þe body þat is to seyn þe witte [or the] suffraunce
[goth to-forne the strengthe of the workynge corage / the
which passioun or suffraunce] clepiþ furþe þe dede of
þe pouzt in hym self. and moeueþ and exiteþ in þis
mene while þe formes þat resten wiþ in forþe. and yif
pat in sensible bodies as I haue seid oure corage nis nat
ytauzt or enprentid by passioun to knowe þise þinges.

4885 but demip and knoweþ of hys owen strengþe þe passioun
or suffraunce subiect to þe body. Moche more þan poo
þinges þat ben absolut and quit fram alle talentz or
affectiouns of bodies. as god or hys aungels ne folwen
nat in discernynge þinges obiet from wiþ oute forþe.
but þei accomplissen and speden þe dede of hir pouzt
by þis resoun. ¶ þan þere comen many manere know-
ynges to dyuerse and differyng substaunces. for þe wit
of þe body þe whiche witte is naked and despoyled of
alle oþer knowynges. pilke witte comeþ to bestes þat ne
mowen nat moeuen hem self here ne þere. as oystres
and muscles and oþer swiche shelle fysshes of þe see.
þat cliuen and ben norissed to roches. but þe ymagina-
cioun comeþ to remuable bestes þat semen to han talent
to fleen or to desiren any þinge. but resoun is al only to
þe lynage of mankynde ryzt as intelligence is oonly þe
deuyne nature. of whiche it folweþ þat pilke knowyng
4902 is more worþe þan [th]is[e] oþer. syn it knoweþ by hys

4973 [yif]—from C.

4979 [or the]—from C.

suffraunce — MS. suffi-
saunce, C. suffraunce4979-80 [goth]—suffraunce]
—from C.

4883 seid—MS. seide, C. seyde

4887 quit—quite

4888 hys—hise

4889 discernynge — MS. dis-

cernyng, C. discernynge
from—fro

4883-84 wille—wit

4895 mowen—mowe

here ne þere—her and ther

4901 whiche—whiche

4902 [th]is[e] oþer — thise
oouthre

propre nature nat only hys subiect. as who seip it ne knoweþ nat al oonly þat apperteinþ proprely to hys knowynge. but it knoweþ þe subgitz of alle oper knowynges. but how shal it þan be yif þat wit *and* ymaginacioun stryuen azeins resonynge *and* sein þat of þilke vniuersel þinges. þat resoun weneþ to seen þat it nis ryzt nauzt. for wit *and* ymaginacioun seyn þat þat. þat is sensible or ymaginable it ne may nat ben vniuersel. þan is eiper þe iugement of resoun [soth]. ne þat þer nis no þinge sensible. or ellys for þat resoun woot wel þat many þinges ben subiect to wit *and* to ymaginacioun. þan is þe consepçioun of resoun veyn *and* fals whiche þat lookeþ *and* comprehendip. þat þat is sensible *and* synguler as uniuerselle. and 3if þat resoun wolde answeren azein to þise two þat is to sein to wit *and* to ymaginacioun. *and* sein þat sopely she hir self. þat is to seyn þat resoun lokeþ *and* cômprehendip by resoun of vniuersalite. boþe þat þat is sensible *and* þat þat is ymaginable. *and* þat þilke two þat is to seyn wit *and* ymaginacioun ne mowen nat stretchen ne enhaunsen hem self to knowynge of vniuersalite for þat þe knowyng of hem ne may exceden nor sourmounþen þe bodyly figure[s] ¶ Certys of þe knowyng of þinges men auzten raper 3eue credence to þe more stedfast *and* to þe more perfit iugement. In þis manere stryuyng þan we þat han strengþe of resonynge *and* of ymaginynge *and* of wit þat is to seyn by resoun *and* by ymaginacioun *and* by wit. [*and*] we sholde rapre preise þe cause of resoun. as who seip þan þe cause of wit or ymaginacioun. semblable þinge is it þat þe resoun of mankynde ne weneþ nat þat þe deuyne intelligence byholdeþ or knoweþ þinges to comen. but ryzt as þe resoun of mankynde knoweþ hem. for þou arguist *and* seist þus. þat

Hence His (i. e. God's) knowledge exceeds all other, comprehending both what belongs to His own nature, and what is comprehended by all inferior creatures. But how shall it be then, if sense and imagination oppose reason, affirming that the general idea of things, which reason thinks it so perfectly sees, is nothing?

For what falls under the cognisance of the senses and imagination cannot be general.

But if reason should answer to this—that in her idea of what is general she comprehends whatever is sensible and imaginable; but as to the senses and imagination, they cannot attain to the knowledge of what is general, since their know-

4921

ledge is confined to material figures; and therefore in all real knowledge of things we must give the greatest credit to that faculty which has a more steadfast and perfect judgment of things. In a controversy of this kind ought not we, who possess faculties of reason, &c., to side with reason and espouse her cause? The cause is entirely similar when human reason thinks the Divine Intelligence cannot behold future events in any other way than she herself is capable of perceiving them. For thus you argue —

4907 *azeins*—*ayein*

4909 *vniuersel*—*vniuersels*

4911 [*soth*]*—from C.*

4914 *fals whiche*—*false which*

4917 *wit*—*witte*

4918 *sobely*—*soothly*

4923 *knowynge*—*knowy*

4926 *3eue*—*yeuen*

4926 *stedfast*—*stidefast*

4930 [*and*]*—from C.*

4931 *or*—*and of*

What things are not necessitated cannot be fore-known; therefore there is no prescience of these things, for, if there were, everything would be fixed by an absolute necessity. If it were possible to enjoy the intelligence of [“fol. 32 b.”] the Deity, we should then deem it right that

4944 sense and imagination should yield to reason, and also judge it proper that human reason should submit to the Divine Intelligence. Let us, therefore, strive to elevate ourselves to the height of the supreme Intelligence—there shall reason see what she cannot discover in herself; and that is in what manner the prescience of God sees and defines all things; although they have no certain event; and she will see that this is no mere conjecture, but rather simple, supreme, and unlimited knowledge.

[The 5th Metaph.] Various are the shapes of created beings. Some creep along the ground and trace the dust in furrows as they go; others with nimble wings float through the air; some with their feet impress the ground, or tread lightly o’er the meads, or seek the shady grove.

yif it ne seme nat to men þat somme þinges han certeyne *and* necessarie bytidynges. þei ne mowen nat ben wist byform certeynely to bytiden. þan nis [ther] no prescience of þilke þinges. *and* yif we trowen þat prescience ben in þise þinges. þan is þer no þinge þat it ne bitidiþ by necessite. but certys yif we myzten han þe iugement of þe deuyne þouzt as we *ben parsoners of resoun. ryzt so as we han demed. it byhouep þat ymaginacioun *and* wit ben byneþe resoun. ryzt so wolde we demen þat it were ryztful þing þat mans resoun auzt[e] to summitten it self *and* to ben byneþe þe deuyne þouzt. for whiche þat yif we mowen. as who seiþ. þat yif þat we mowen I conseil[e] þat we enhanse vs in to þe heyzt of þilke souereyne intelligence. for þere shal resoun wel seen þat þat it ne may nat by-holden in it self. *and* certys þat is þis in what manere þe prescience of god seþ alle þinges certains *and* difinissid al þouz þei ne han no certein issues or by-tydynges. ne þis is non oppinioun but it is rapr þe simplicité of þe souereyn science þat nis nat enclosed nor yshet wiþinneno boundes.

QUAM VARIIS FIGURIS.

þE bestes passen by þe erþes by ful dyuerse figures for somme of hem han hir bodies strauzt *and* crepen in þe dust *and* drawnen after hem a trais or a forghé contynued. þat is to sein as addres or snakes. *and* oþer bestes by [the] wandryng lyztnesse of hir wenges beten þe wyndes *and* ouer-swymmen þe spaces of þe longe eyer by moist flee[y]nge. *and* oþer bestes gladen hem to diggen her traas or her stappes in þe erþe wiþ hir goynge or wiþ her feet. or to gone eyþe[r]

4965 by þe grene feldes or [elles] to walken vnder þe wodes.

4938 [ther]—from C.
4939 trowen—trowe
4942 parsoners—parsoneres
4945 mans—mannes
4946 auzt[e]—owte
4947 whiche—which
4948 þat yif—yif þat

4949 heyt—heihte
þere—ther
4952 þouz—MS. þouzt
4955 no—none
4957 somme—som
4959 forghé contynued —
forwh ikontynued

4959 addres—nadriss
4960 [the]—from C.
4963 hem—hem self
stappes—steppis
4964 or to gone—*and* to gon
eyþe[r]—eyther
4965 [elles]—from C.

and al be it so þat þou seest þat þei alle discorden by dyuerse formes. algate hire [faces] enclini[n]g heuieþ hire dulle wittes. Onlyche þe lynage of man heueþ heyest hys hey3e heued and stondeþ lyzt wiþ hys vpryzt body and byholdeþ þe erþe vndir hym. [and] but-ȝif þou erþely man wexest yuel oute of þi witte. þis figure amonestep þe þat axest þe heuene wiþ þi ryzt[e] visage. and hast areised þi forhede to beren vp on heye þi corage so þat þi pouzt ne be nat yheuied ne put lowe vndir foot. sen þat þi body is so heye areised.

4975

PROSA VLTIMA.

QUONIAM IGITUR UTI PAULO ANTE.

ÞErfore þan as I haue shewed a litel her byforne þat al pinges þat is ywist nis nat knowen by hys nature propre. but by þe nature of hem þat comprehendē it. ¶ Lat vs loke now in as moche as it is leueful to vs. as who seiþ lat vs loken now as we mowen whiche þat þe estat is of þe deuyne substaunce so þat we mowen [ek] knowen what his science is. þe comune iugement of alle creatures resonables þan is þis þat god is eterne. lat vs considere þan what is eternite. For certys þat shal shewen vs to-gidre þe deuyne nature and þe deuyne science ¶ Eternite þan is perfit possessioun and al togidre of lijf interminable and þat shewep more clerely by þe comparisoun or collacioun of temporel pinges. for al ping þat lyueþ in tyme it is present and procedip fro preteritȝ in to futures. þat is to sein. fro tyme passed in to tyme comynge. ne þer nis no ping establissed in tyme þat may enbracen to-gidre al þe space of hys lijf. for certys ȝit ne hap it nat taken þe tyme of þe morwe. and it hap lost þat of ȝister-day. and certys in þe lijf

Though we see an endless variety of forms, yet all are prone; to the earth they bend their looks, increasing the heaviness of their dull sense. Man alone doth raise aloft his noble head; light and erect he spurns the earth. Thou art admonished by this figure then, unless by sense deceived, that whilst taught by thy lofty men to look above, thou shouldst elevate thy mind lest it sink below its proper level. [The 6th prose ends the laste.]

Since everything which is known is not, as I have shown, perceived by its own inherent properties, but by the faculties of those comprehending them, let us now examine the disposition of the Divine nature. All rational creatures agree in affirming that God is eternal. And eternity is a full, total, and perfect possession of a life which shall never end. This will appear more clearly from a comparison with temporal things. Temporal existence proceeds from the past to the present, and thence to the future. And there is nothing under the law of time, which can at once comprehend the whole space of its existence. Having lost yesterday it does not as yet enjoy to-morrow; and as for to-day it consists only in the present transitory moment.

4967 [faces]—from C.
algate—algates
enclini[n]g—enclynyn
4968 Onlyche—Only
heyest—heyeste
4970 erþe—erthes
4971 oule—owt
witte—wit

4972 ryzt[e]—ryhte
hast—MS. hape, C. hast
4973 forhede—forheuyd
on heye—a heigh
4974 foot sen—foote syn
4977 al pinges—alle thinges
4979 moche—moche
4980 loken—loke

4980 whiche—which
4981 [ek]—from C.
4987 clerely—cleerly
4989 al—alle
4993-4 hab—MS. hape
4993 þe (3)—to
4994 þat—the tyme

Whatever, therefore, is subjected to a temporal condition, as Aristotle thought of the world, may be without beginning and without end; and although its duration may extend [* fol. 39.] to an infinity of time, yet it cannot rightly be called eternal: for it doth not comprehend at once the whole extent of its infinite duration, having no knowledge of things future which are not yet arrived. For what is eternal must be always present to itself and master of itself, and have always with it the infinite succession of time. Therefore some philosophers, who had heard that

5011

Plato believed that this world had neither beginning nor end, falsely concluded, that the created universe was coeternal with its Creator. But it is one thing to be conducted through a life of infinite duration, which was Plato's opinion of the world, and another thing to comprehend at once the whole extent of this duration as present which, it is manifest, can only belong to the Divine mind. Nor ought it to seem to us that God is prior to and more ancient than his creatures by the space of

of þis day 3e ne lyuen no more but ryzt as in þis moeueable *and* transitorie moment. þan pilke þinge þat suffriþ temporel condicioun. a[l]þoughe þat [it] bygan neuer to be. ne þoughe it neuere cese forto be. as aristotle demde of þe worlde. and al þou3 þat þe lif of it be strecchid wiþ infinite of tyme. 3it al*gates nis it no swichþe þing þat men myzten trowen by ryzt þat it is eterne. for al þou3 þat it comprehende *and* embrace þe space of lifo infinite. 3it algates ne [em]braceþ it nat þe space of þe lif alto-gidre. for it ne haþ nat þe futures þat ne ben nat 3it. ne it ne haþ no lenger þe preterit3 þat ben ydon or ypassed. but pilke þing þan þat haþ *and* comprehendþ to-gidre alle þe plente of þe lif interminable. to whom þere ne failþ nat of þe future. *and* to whom þer nis nat of þe preterit escapid nor ypassed. pilk[e] same is ywitnessed or yproued by ryzt to ben eterne. and it byhoueþ by necessite þat pilke þinge be alwey present to hym self *and* compotent. as who seiþ alwey present to hym self *and* so myzty þat al by ryzt at hys plesaunce. *and* þat he haue al present þe infinit of þe moeuable tyme. wherfore som men trowen wrongefully þat whan þei heren þat it semid[e] to plato þat þis worlde ne had[de] neuer bygynnyng of tyme. ne þat it neuere shal haue faylynge. þei wenen in þis manere þat þis worlde ben maked coeterne wiþ his makere. as who seiþ. þei wenen þat þis worlde *and* god ben maked to-gidre eterne. and it is a wrongful wenyng. for oper þing is it to ben yladd by lif interminable as plato graunted[e] to þe worlde. *and* oper þing is it to embracen to-gidre alle þe presence to þe lif interminable. þe whiche þing it is clere *and* manifest

4997 a[l]þoughe—al-thogh

[it]—from C.

4999 worlde—world

5001 swiche—swych

5002 eterne— from C., MS.

eternite

5003 lye—lyf

5004 5-6 haþ—MS. haþe

5006 ydon—MS. ydone, C. I.

doon

5007 alle—al

5008-9 nat—nawht

5010 pilk[e]—thilke

or—and

5014 by—be

5016 semid[e]—semede

5017 worlde—world

had[de]—hadde

5018 hawe—han

5019-20 worlde—world

5022 yladd—MS. yladde, C.

I-lad

5023 worlde—world

5024 embracen—embrace

alle—al

presence to—present of

5025 clere—cleer

þat it is propre to þe deuine þouȝt. ne it ne sholde nat
semen to vs þat god is elder þan þinges þat ben ymaked
by quantite of tyme. but raþer by þe proprete of hys
symple nature. for þis ilke infinit[e] moeuynge of temporel
þinges folwiþ þis presentarie estat of þe lijf inmoeue-
able. and so as it ne may nat contrefeten it ne feynen
it ne ben euene lyke to it. for þe inmoeueablete. þat is
to seyn þat is in þe eternite of god. ¶ it faileþ and
falleþ in to moeuynge fro þe simplicitie of [the] pre-
sence of god. and disencrosiþ to þe infinite quantite of
future and of preterit. and so as it ne may nat han to-
gidre al þe plente of þe lif. algates ȝitte for as moche as
it ne cesiþ neuere forto ben in som manere it semep
somde[1] to vs þat it folwiþ and resembliþ pilke þing
þat it ne may nat attayne to. ne fulfille. and byndeþ it
self to som manere presence of þis litel and swifte
moment. þe whiche presence of þis lytele and swifte
moment. for þat it bereþ a manere ymage or lykenesse
of þe ay dwellynge presence of god. it graunteþ to
swiche manere þinges as it bitidip to þat it semep hem
þat þise þinges han ben and ben and for [þat] þe pre-
sence of swiche litel moment ne may nat dwelle per-
for [it] rauyssid[e] and took þe infinit[e] wey of tyme. þat
is to seyn by successioun. and by þis manere it is ydon.
for þat it sholde continue þe lif in goynge of þe whiche
lif it ne myzt[e] nat embrace þe plente in dwellynge.
and for þi yif we willen putte worpi name[s] to þinges
and folwen plato. lat vs seyn þan sobely þat god is
eterne. and þat þe worlde is perpetuel. þan syn þat
euery iugement knoweþ and comprehendip by hys owen
nature þinges þat ben subiect vnto hym. þere is sobely
al-wey to god an eterne and presentarie estat. and þe

time, but rather by the simple and undivided per-
ties of his nature. The in-
finite progression of temporal
things imitates the ever-present
condition of an immovable life:
and since it cannot copy nor
equal it from an immovable and
simply present state, it passes
into motion and into an infinite
measure of past and future time.
But since it cannot possess at
once the whole extent of its dura-
tion, yet, as it never ceases
wholly to be, it faintly emulates
that whose perfection it can
neither attain nor express, by at-
taching itself to 5041

the present fleeting moment,
which, because it resembles the
durable present time, imparts to
those things that partake of it an
appearance of existence. But
as it cannot stop or abide it pur-
sues its course through infinite
time, and by gliding along it
continues its duration, the
plentitude of which it could
not comprehend, by abiding in a
permanent state. If we would fol-
low Plato in giving things their
right names, let us say that God
is eternal and the world perpetual.
His knowledge, surpassing the
progression of time, is ever pre-
sent, containing the infinite space

5033 lyke—lyk

5034 [the]—from C.

5039 somde[1]—somdel

5040 fulfille—fullfyllen

5041 litel—fr. m C., MS. lykly

5042 whiche—which

lytele—from C., MS. lykly

5046 ben (1)—yben

[þat]—from C.

5047 swiche—awygh

5048 [it]—from C.

5061 myzt[e]—myhte

5062 willen putte—wollen
putten

5062 name[s]—names

5063 sobely—sothly

5064 worlde—world

5065 owen—owne

5066 sobely—sothly

5067 al-wey—al-weys

of past and future times, and embraces in his clear insight all things, as if they were now transacting. Prescience is, then, a foreknowledge, not of what is to come, but of the present and *never-failing now* (in which God [* fol. 59 b.] sees all things as if immovably present). Therefore *foreknowledge* is not so applicable a term as *providence*—for God looks down upon all things from the summit of the universe. Do you think that God imposes a necessity on things by beholding them? It is not so in human affairs. Does your view

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of an action lay any necessity upon it? B. No. P. By parity of reason it is clear that whilst you see only some things in a limited instant, God sees all things in his ever-present time. His Divine prescience therefore does not change the nature of things—but only beholds those things as present to him which shall in time be produced. Nor does he judge confusedly of them, but knows at one view what will necessarily and what will not necessarily happen. The eye of God, seeing all things, doth not alter the properties of things, for everything is present to him, though its temporal event is future.

science of hym þat ouer-passeþ alle temporel moe[ue]-ment dwellip in þe symplite of hys presence and embraceþ and considereþ alle þe infinit spaces of tymes preterit3 and futures and lokeþ in þis symple knowynge alle þinges of preterit ryzt as þei weren ydoon presently ryzt now ¶ yif þou wolt þan þenke and avisen þe prescience by whiche it knoweþ al[le] þinges *þou ne shalt nat demen it as prescience of þinges to comen. but þou shalt demen [it] more ryztfully þat it is science of presence or of instaunce þat neuer ne fayleþ. for whiche it nis nat ycleped prouidence but it sholde raper be cleped purueaunce þat is establissed ful fer fro ryzt lowe þinges. and byholdeþ from a-fer alle þinges ryzt as it were fro þe heye heyzte of þinges. whi axest þou þan or why disputest þou þan þat þilke þinges ben don by necessite whiche þat ben yseyen and yknowen by þe deuyne syzt. syn þat for soþe men ne maken nat þilke þinges necessarie. whiche þat þe[i] seen be ydoon in hire syzt. for addip þi byholdynge any necessite to þilke þinges þat þou byholdest present. ¶ Nay quod I. p. Gertys þan yif men myzte maken any digne comparisoun or collacioun of þe presence diuina. and of þe presence of mankynde. ryzt so as 3e seen somme þinges in þis temporel presente. ryzt so seep god alle þinges by hys eterne present. ¶ wherfore þis dyuyne prescience ne chaungeþ nat þe nature ne þe proprete of þinges but byholdeþ swyche þinges present to hym ward. as þei shollen bytiden to 3ow ward in tyme to come. ne it ne confoundeþ nat þe Iugement3 of þinges but by of syzt of hys pouzt he knoweþ þe þinges to comen as wel necessarie as nat necessarie. ryzt so as whan 3e seen togidre a man walke on þe erþe and þe sonne arysæn in [the] heuene. al be it so þat 3e seen and byholden þat

5059 *alle*—al
moe[ue]ment—mouement
 5063 *þenke*—thinken
avisen—advise
 5064 *whiche*—which
al[le]—alle

5066 *shalt*—shal
 [it]—from C.
 5069 *whiche*—which
 5074-76 *syzt*—syhte
 5075 *whiche*—which
 þe[re]—they

5085 *come*—comyn
 5086 *of syzt*—O syhte
 5087 *he knoweþ*—MS. repeats
 5000 [*the*]—from C.

oon *and* þat oper to-gidre. 3it napeles 3e demen *and* discerne þat þat oon is uoluntarie *and* þat oper is neces-
sarie. ¶ Ryzt so þan [the] deuyne lokynge byholdynge
alle þinges vnder hym ne troubleþ nat þe qualite of
þinges þat ben certeynely present to hym ward. but as
to þe condicioun of tyme for soþe þei ben futuro. for
whiche it folwip þat þis nis non oppinioun. but raper a
stedfast knowyng ystrenged by soþenes. þat whan
þat god knoweþ any þinge to be he ne vnwoot nat þat
þilke þinge wanteþ necessite to be. þis is to seyn þat
whan þat god knoweþ any þinge to bitide. he woot wel
þat it ne haþ no necessite to bitide. *and* yif þou seist
here þat þilke þinge þat god seep to bytide it ne may
nat vnbytide. as who seiþ it mot bitide. ¶ *and* þilke
þinge þat þat ne may nat vnbytide it mot bitide by
necessite. *and* þat þou streine me to þis name of neces-
site. certys I wol wel confessen *and* byknowe a þinge of
ful sadde troupe. but vnneþ shal þere any wyzt [mowe]
seen it or comen þer-to. but yif þat he be byholder of þe
deuyne pouzte. ¶ for I wol answepe þe þus. þat þilke
þinge þat is future whan it is referred to þe deuyne
knowyng þan is it necessarie. but certys whan it is vn-
dirstonden in hys owen kynde men sen it [is] vtterly fre
and absolut from alle necessite. for certys þer ben two
maneres of necessites. þat oon necessite is symple as
þus. þat it byhoueþ by necessite þat alle men be mortal
or dedely. an oper necessite is condicionel as þus. yif
þou wost þat a man walkip. it byhoueþ by necessite þat
he walke. þilke þinge þan þat any wyzt haþ yknowe to
be. it ne may ben non oper weyes þan he knoweþ it to
be. ¶ but þis condicioun ne draweþ nat wip hir þilke
necessite symple. For certys þis necessite condicionel.

When God knows that anything is to be, he knows at the same time that it is not under the necessity of being — but this is not conjecture, but certain knowledge founded upon truth. If you insist that *what God foresees shall and must happen*; and that which cannot do otherwise than happen, must needs happen, and so bind me to admit a necessity, I must confess that things are under such a restraint; but it is a truth that we scarce can comprehend, unless we be acquainted with the Divine counsels. For I will answer you thus. That the

5105 thing which is to happen in relation to the Divine knowledge is necessary; but, considered in its own nature, seems free and absolute. There are two kinds of necessity—one simple; as men must necessarily die—the other is conditional, as if you know a man walks he must necessarily walk—for that which is known cannot be otherwise than what it is apprehended to be. But this condition does not infer the absolute necessity, for the nature of the thing itself does not here constitute the necessity, but the necessity arises from the conjunction of the condition. No necessity compels a man to walk who does so

5092 *discerne*—discernen
5093 [*the*]—from C.
5097 *whiche*—which
5098 *stedfast*—stidfast
soþenes—sothnesse
5102 *haþ*—MS. haþe
5104 *bitide*—bide

5108 *sadde*—sad
enneþ—vnnethe
[*mowe*]—from C.
5109 *comen*—come
5110 *pouzte*—thought
answere—answeren
5113 *sen*—MS. sene, C. sen

5113 [*is*]—from C.
5117 *dedely*—dedly
5119 *haþ*—MS. haþe
5121 *condicioun*—from C.,
MS. *necessite*

willingly, but it must be necessary that he walk when he does step forward. So everything that is present to the eye of Providence must assuredly be, although there is

[* fol. 40.] nothing in its own nature to constitute that necessity. Since God beholds all future events proceeding from free-will as actually present—these events in relation to Divine sight are necessary—yet in relation to themselves they are absolutely free. All things which God foresees shall surely come to pass; but some of these things proceed from free-will, which although they hap-

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pen, yet do not thereby change their nature, as before they happened they had it in their power not to happen. But it is a thing of no moment then, whether things are necessary in their own nature or not, since by the condition of the Divine knowledge they fell out as if they were necessitated.

P. The difference is explained in the instances lately given you, of the man walking, &c. The event of the former was necessary before it befell, whereas that of the latter was altogether free.
A. Then I did not go from the

þe propre nature of it ne makeþ it nauzt. but þe adieccioun of þe condicioun makip it. for no necessite ne constreynep a man to [gon / þat] goop by his propre wille. al be it so þat whan he goop þat it is necessarie þat he goop. ¶ Ryzt on þis same manere þan. yif þat þe purueaunce of god seep any þing present. þan mot pilke *þinge be by necessite. al þouȝ þat it ne haue no necessite of hys owen nature. but certys þe futures þat bytyden by freedom of arbitre god seep hem alle to-gidre presentȝ. þise þinges þan [yif] þei ben referred to þe deuyne syzt. þan ben þei maked necessarie to þe condicioun of þe deuyne knowynge. but certys yif pilke þinges ben considered by hem self þei ben absolut of necessite. and ne forleten nat ne cesen nat of þe liberte of hire owen nature. þan certys wiþ outen doute alle þe þingus shollen be doon whiche þat god woot by-forȝ þat þei ben to comen. but somme of hem comen and bitiden of [free] arbitre or of fre wille. þat al be it so þat þei by-tiden. ȝit algates ne lese þei nat hire propre nature ne beynge. by þe whiche first or þat þei were doon þei hadden power nat to han bitidd. Boece. what is þis to seyn þan quod I. þat þinges ne ben nat necessarie by hire propre nature. so as þei comen in alle maneres in þe lykenesse of necessite by þe condicioun of þe deuyne science. Philosophie. þis is þe difference quod she. þat þo þinges þat I purposed[e] þe a litel here byform. þat is to seyn þe sonne arysynge and þe man walkynge þat perwhiles þat pilke þinges ben ydon. þei ne myȝten nat ben vndon. napeles þat oon of hem or it was ydon it byhoued[e] by necessite þat it was ydon. but nat þat oper. ryzt so it is here þat þe þinges þat god haþ present.

5123 nauzt—nat
5125 [gon þat]—from C.
wille—wil
5129 mot—MS. mote. C. mot
5131 presentȝ—present
5132 [yif]—from C.
syzt—syhte
5137 wiþ outen—with-owte
5138 whiche—which

5139 somme—som
5140 [fre]—from C.
5141 ne (2)—C. in
5142 whiche—which
were doon—woeryn Idoon
5143 bitidd—MS. bitidde, C.
bityd
5148 purposed[e] — purposede

5150 ydon—MS. ydone, C.
I-doon
myȝten—myhte
5151 vndon—MS. vndone, C.
vndon
5151-2 ydon—MS. ydone, C.
I-doon
5152 byhoued[e]—houyd
5153 haþ—MS. haþe

wiþ outen doute þei shulle ben. but somme of hem descendip of þe nature of þinges as þe sonne arysynge. *and* somme descendip of þe power of þe doers as þe man walkynge. ¶ þan seide I. no wronge þat yif þat þise þinges ben referred to þe deuyne knowynge þan ben þei necessarie. *and* yif þei ben considered by hem selfe þan ben þei absolut from þe bonde of necessite. ryȝt so [as] alle þinges þat appiereþ or sheweþ to þe wittes yif þou referre it to resoun it is vniuersel. *and* yif þou referre it or look[e] it to it self. þan is it synguler. but now yif þou seist þus þat yif it be in my power to chaunge my purpose. þan shal I voide þe purueaunce of god. whan þat perauenture I shal han chaunged þo þinges þat he knoweþ byforn. þan shal I answere þe þus ¶ Certys þou maist wel chaungen þi purpos but for as mochel as þe present sopenesse of þe deuyne purueaunce byholdeþ þat þou mayst chaungen þi purpose. *and* wheþir þou wolt chaunge it or no. *and* whider-ward þat þou tourne it. þou maist nat eschewen þe deuyne prescience ryȝt as þou ne mayst nat fleen þe syȝt of þe present eye. al þouȝ þat þou tourne þi self by þi fre wille in to dyuerse accioun. ¶ But þou mayst seyn aȝeyne how shal it þan be. shal nat þe dyuyne science ben chaunged by my disposicioun whan þat I wol oþing now *and* now an oþer. *and* pilke prescience ne semeþ it nat to enterchaunge stoundes of knowynges. as who seip. ne shal it nat seme to vs þat þe deuyne prescience enterchaungeþ hys dyuers stoundes of knowynge. so þat it knowe somme tyme oþing *and* somme tyme þe contrarie. ¶ No for soþe. [quod I] for þe deuyne syȝt renneþ to-forne *and* seeþ alle futures *and* clepeþ hem aȝein

truth when I said that some things referred to the Divine knowledge are necessary, while considered in themselves they are not under the bond of necessity. In the same way everything that is an object of sense is general when considered in relation to reason—but particular when considered by itself. But you may say—If I am able to change my purpose I can deceive providence by changing that which she hath foreseen I would do. P. You may perhaps alter your purpose—but as providence takes note of your
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intentions, you cannot deceive her; for you cannot escape the divine prescience though you have the power, through a free-will, to vary and diversify your actions. But you may say—Shall the divine knowledge be changed according to the mutability of my disposition, and the apprehensions of the Deity fluctuated with my changing purposes? No, indeed! The view of the Deity fore-runs every future event, and brings it back into the presence of his own knowledge, which does not vary, as you imagine, to conform to your caprices, but remaining fixed, at once

5154 wiþ outen—with-owte
shulle—shollen
5156 doers—doeres
5157 wronge—wrong
5159 selfe—self
5160 from—from
bonde—bond
[as]—from C.

5163 look[e]—loke
5166 þo—the
5169 sopenesse—sothnesse
5170 chaungen—chaunge
5173 syȝt—syhte
5175 wille—wyl
5177 wol—wole
5179 enterchaunge—MS. en-

terchaungyng, C. entre-
chaunge
5181 aȝe—hise
5182 somme (1)—sim
5183 somme (2)—som
5183 syȝt—syhte
5184 to-forne—to-forn

foresees and comprehends all your changes. This faculty of comprehending and seeing all things as present, God does not receive from the issue of futurities, but from the simplicity of his own nature. Here, then, is an answer to your former objection—that it is folly to think that our future actions and events are the causes of the prescience of God. For the Divine mind, em-
[* fol. 41 b.]

bracing and comprehending all things by a present knowledge, plans and directs all things and is not dependent upon futurity. Since no necessity is imposed

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upon things by the Divine prescience, there remains to men an inviolable freedom of will. And those laws are just which assign rewards and punishments to men possessing free-will. Moreover, God, who sits on high, foreknows all things, and the eternal presence of his knowledge concurs with the future quality of our actions, dispensing rewards to good and punishments to evil men.

Nor are our hopes and prayers reposed in, and addressed to God in vain, which when they are sincere cannot be inefficacious nor unsuccessful. Resist and turn from vice—honour and

and retournip hem to be presence of hys propre knowynge. ne he ne entrechaungeþ nat [so] as þou wenest þe stoundes of forknowyng [as] now þis now þat. but he ay dwellynge comiþ byforn and embraceþ at o strook alle þi mutaciouns. and þis presence to comprehenden and to sen alle þinges. god ne hap nat taken it of þe bitydyng of þinges forto come. but of hys propre simplicite. ¶ and her by is assoiled pilke þing þat þou putttest a litel her byforne. þat is to seyne þat it is vnworpi þinge to seyn þat oure futures zeuen cause of þe science of god ¶ For certys *þis strengþe of þe deuyne science whiche þat embraceþ alle þinge by his presentarie knowynge establissey manere to alle þingus and it ne awip nat to lattere þinges. and syn þat pise þinges ben þus. þat is to seyn syn þat necessite nis nat in þinges by þe deuyne prescience. þan is þer fredom of arbitre. þat dwelleþ hool and vnwemmed to mortal men. ne þe lawes ne purpose nat wikkedly meedes and peynes to þe willynges of men þat ben vnbounde and quit of alle necessite. ¶ And god byholder and forwiter of alle þinges dwellip aboue and þe present eternite of hys syzt renneþ alwey wip þe dyuerse qualite of oure dedes dispensyng and ordeynynge medes to good[e] men. and tourmentz to wicked men. ne in ydel ne in veyn ne ben þer nat put in god hope and prayeres. þat ne mowen nat ben vnspedful ne wip oute effect whan þei ben ryztful ¶ wipstond þan and eschewe þou vices. worshippe and loue þou vertus. arise þi corage to ryztful hoopes. zelde þou humble preiers an heyze. grete necessite of prowessse and vertue is encharged and comaunded to þow yif þe nil nat dissimulen. ¶ Syn þat þe worchen and doon. þat is to seyn þoure dedes and þoure workes

5196 [so]—from C.
5197 [as]—from C.
5198 comiþ—comth
5199 hap—MS. hape
5203 seyne—seyn
5206 whiche—which
5208 awip—oweth

5199 þat is to — pre-
science—omitted
5203 vnbounde—vnbownden
quit—quite
5206 syzt—sight
5207 good[e]—goode
5211 wipstond — MS. wip-

stonde, C. withstond
5213 an heyze—a heygh
grete—Gret
5215 worchen—workyn
5216 and (2)—or

by-fore þe eyen of þe Iuge þat seep *and* demep alle love virtue. exalt
þinges. [To whom be goye *and* worshiþe bi Infynyt (the truest hope),
tymes / AMEN.] 5219 prayers with
humility. If you
are sincere you

will feel that you are under an obligation to lead a good and virtuous life, inasmuch as all your actions and works are done in the presence of an all-discerning Judge.

EXPLICIT LIBER QUINTUS. ET VLTIMUS.

5217 *by-fore—by-fore*
5218 [*To whom—Amen*]
from C.; MS. reads *et*
cetera after 'þinges.' C.

ends with the following
rubric:
Explicit explicat ludere
scriptor eat

Finito libro sit laus *et*
gloria *Christo*
Corpore scribentis sit
gratia cunctipotentis

APPENDIX.

[*Camb. Univ. MS. li. 3. 21, fol. 52 b.*]

Chawcer vp-on this fyfte metur of the second book

A Blysful lyf a paysyble *and* a swete
 Ledden the poeples in the former age
 They helde hem paied of the fructes þat þey ete
 Whiche þat the feldes yaue hem by vsage 4
 They ne weere nat forpampred *with* owtrage
 Onknowyn was þ^e quyerne *and* ek the melle
 They eten mast hawes *and* swych pownage
 And dronken water of the colde welle 8

¶ Yit nas the grownd nat wownded *with* þ^e plowh
 But corn vp-sprong vnsowe of mannes hond
 þe which they gnodded *and* eete nat half .I.-nowh
 No man yit knewe the forwes of his lond 12
 No man the fyr owt of the flynt yit fonde
 Vn-koruen and vn-grobbed lay the vyne
 No man yit in the morter spices grond
 To clarre ne to sawse of galentyne 16

¶ No Madyr welde or wod no litestere
 Ne knewh / the fles was of is former hewe
 No flesh ne wyste offence of egge or spere
 No coyn ne knewh man which is fals or trewe 20
 No ship yit karf the wawes grene *and* blewe
 No Marchaunt yit ne fette owt-landiss^h ware
 No batails trompes for the werres folk ne knewe
 Ne towres heye *and* walles rownde or square 24

- ¶ What sholde it han avayled to werreye
 Ther lay no profyt ther was no rychesse
 But corsed was the tyme .I. dar wel seye [fol. 53.]
 þat men fyrst dede hir swety bysynesse 28
 To grobbe vp metal lurkyng in dirkenesse
And in þe Ryuerys fyrst gemmys sowhte
 Allas than sprong vp al the cursydnesse
 Of coueytise þat fyrst ovr sorwe browhte 32
- ¶ Thyse tyrauntz put hem gladly nat in pres
 No places wyldnesse ne no bussches for to wynne
 Ther pouerte is as seith diogenes
 Ther as vitayle ek is so skars *and* thinne 36
 þat nat but mast or apples is ther Inne
 But þer as bagges ben *and* fat vitaille
 Ther wol they gon *and* spare for no synne
 With al hir ost the Cyte forto a-sayle 40
- ¶ Yit was no palcis chaumbres ne non halles
 In kaues *and* wodes softe *and* swete
 Sleptin this blyssed folk *with-owte* walles
 On gras or leues in parfyt Ioye reste *and* quiete 44
 No down of fetheres ne no bleched shete
 Was kyd to hem but in surte they slepte
 Hir hertes weere al on *with-owte* galles
 Euerych of hem his feith to oother kepte 48
- ¶ Vnforged was the hawberke *and* the plate
 þ^e lambyssh poeple voyded of alle vyse
 Hadden no fantesye to debate
 But eche of hem wolde oother wel cheryce 52
 No pride non enuye non Auaryce
 No lord no taylage by no tyranye
 Vmblesse *and* pes good feith the emperice
 56

30, 40 MS. transposes the lines

44 On—MS. Or

56 A line omitted, but no gap left for one.

¶ Yit was nat Iuppiter the lykerous
 þat fyrst was fadyr of delicacie
 Come in this world ne nembroth desyrous
 To regne had nat maad his towres hye 60
 Allas allas now may [men] wepe And crye
 For in owre dayes nis but couetyse
 Dowblenesse *and* tresoun *and* enuye
 Poyson *and* manslawhtre *and* mordre in sondry wyse

CAUSER / BALADES DE VILAGE SANZ PEINTURE

¶ This wrecched worlde-is *transmutacioun*
 As wele / or wo / now poere *and* now honou
 With-owten ordyr or wis descresyoun
 Gouerned is by fortunes errour 4
 But natheles the lakke of hyr fauowr'
 Ne may nat don me syngen thowh I. deye
 Iay tout perdu moun temps *et* moun labour [fol. 58 b.]
 For fynaly fortune .I. the deffye 8

¶ Yit is me left the lyht of my resoun
 To knowen frend fro foo in thi merowr'
 So mochel hath yit thy whirlynge vp *and* down
 I-tawht me for to knowe in an howr 12
 But trewely no fors of thi reddowr'
 To hym þat ouer hym self hath the maystrye
 My suffysaunce shal be my socour'
 For fynaly fortune I. thee deffye 16

¶ O socrates þou stidfast chaumpyoun
 She neuer myht[e] be thi tormentowr
 Thow neuer dreddest hyr oppressyoun
 Ne in hyr chere fownde thow no sauour' 20
 Thow knewe wel the deseyte of hyr colour'
 And þat hir most[e] worshippe is to lye
 I knew hir ek a fals dissimulour'
 For fynaly fortune .I. the deffye 24

LE RESPOUNCE DE FORTUNE A PLEINTIF.

¶ No man ys wrechchyd but hym self yt wene
And he þat hath hym self hat suffisaunce
 Whi seysthow thanne y am [to] the so kene
 þat hast thy self owt of my gouernaunce 28
 Sey thus graunt mercy of thyn haboundaunce
 That thou hast lent or this why wolt þou stryue
 What woost thou yit how y the wol auaunce
And ek thou hast thy beste frende a-lyue 32

¶ I haue the tawht deuisoun by-twene
 Frend of effect *and* frende of cowntenaunce
 The nedeth nat the galle of no hyene
 þat cureth eyen derkyd for penaunce 36
 Now se[st] thou cleer þat weere in ignoraunce
 Yit halt thin ancre *and* yit thou mayst aryue
 Ther bownte berth the keye of my substaunce
And ek þou hast thy beste frende alyue 40

¶ How manye haue .I. refused to sustigne
 Syn .I. the fostred haue in thy plesaunce
 Wolthow thanne make a statute on þy quyene
 þat .I. shal ben ay at thy ordynaunce 44
 Thou born art in my regne of varyaunce
 Abowte the wheel *with* oother most thou dryue
 My loore is bet than wikke is thi greuaunce
And ek þou hast thy beste frende a-lyue 48

LE RESPOUNCE DU PLEINTIF COUNTR^e FORTUNE.

¶ Thy loore y dempne / it is aduersyte [fol. 54.]
 My frend maysthow nat reuen blynde goddessse
 þat .I. thy frendes knowe .I. thanke to the
 Tak hem agayn / lat hem go lye on presse 52
 The negardye in kepynge hyr rychesse
 Prenostik is thou wolt hir' towr' asayle

37 *se[st]*—partly erased and *ist* written on it in a later hand.
 41 *igne* of *sustigne* is in a later hand.

Wikke appetyt comth ay before sykenesse
In general this rewle may nat fayle 56

LE RESPOUNSE DE FORTUNE COUNTRE LE PLEINTIF

¶ Thow pynchest at my mutabylyte
For .I. the lente a drope of my rychesse
And now me lykyth to with-drawe me
Whi sholdysthow my realte apresse 60
The see may ebbe *and* flowen moore or lesse
The welkne hath myht to shyne reyne or hayle
Ryht so mot .I. kythen my brutelnesse
In general this rewle may nat fayle 64

LE PLEINTIF

¶ Lo excussyoun of the maieste
pat al purueyeth of his ryhtwysnesse
That same thinge fortune clepyn ye
Ye blynde beestys ful of lewednesse 68
The heuene hath proprete of sykyrnesse
This world hath euer resteles trauayle
Thy laste day is ende of myn inter[e]sse
In general this rewele may nat fayle 72

LENUOY DE FORTUNE

¶ Prynses .I. prey yow of yowre gentilleses
Lat nat this man on me thus crye *and* pleyne
And .I. shal quyte yow yowre bysynesse
At my requeste as thre of yow or tweyne 76
pat but yow lest releue hym of hys peyne
Preyeth hys best frend of his noblesse
That to som betere est it he may atayne

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 Forpest, farthest, 136/3918
 Forpi, therefore, 28/689
 Fortroden, trodden upon, trampled, 109/3100
 Fortunel, fortuitous, 152/4379
 Fortunouse, Fortuouse, fortuitous, 26/639, 38/983, 132/3779
 Forwes, furrows, 180/12
 Forwiter, foreknower, 178/5204
 Foryetyn, forgotten, 101/2872
 Foundement, foundation, 98/2754
 Fowel, bird, 107/3053
 Fram, from, 70/1931
 Freele, frail, 61/1658
 Frete, to eat, devour, 147/4252
 Frounce, flounce, 9/147
 Fructe, fruit, 180/3
 Frutefyng, fructifying, fruitful, 6/72
 Fulfilling, satisfying, 79/2178
 Fycche, fix, 108/3073. *See* Fiochen.
 Fyn, end, 69/1892
 Gabbe, 'gabbe I?' am I deceived? 49/1308
 Galentyne, a dish in ancient cookery made of sopped bread and spices (*Halliwel*), 180/16
 Galles, galls, 181/47
 Gapen, to desire, be greedy for, 15/324, 36/910
 Gapinge, desire, 36/910
 Gastnesse, terror, fear, 75/2079
 Geaunt, giant, 104/2966
 Gentilesse, nobility, 78/2154
 Geometrien, geometrician, 91/2552
 Gerdoned, rewarded, 120/3410
 Gerdoun, reward, 13/265
 Gerner, garner, 15/305
 Gesse, Gessen, to deem, suppose, estimate, 17/378, 19/416, 65/1782
 Gessinge, opinion, 21/475
 Gest, guest, 38/979
 Gideresse, a female guide, 108/3084
 Gise, guise, mode, 71/1943
 Giser, gizzard, 107/3054
 Glotonus, greedy, 26/620
 Gnodded, pounded, 180/11
 Gobet, a bit (of gold), 51/1349
 Godhed, divinity, 122/3492
 Goost, spirit, ghost, 40/1036
 Gouvernaile, government (*gubernaculum*), 27/651

- Governance, control, 32/813
 Goye, joy, 179/5218
 Graype, to devise, prepare, 19/438
 Grobbe up, to grub up, 181/29
 Grond, did grind, 180/15
 Gynne, snare, trap, 82/2256
 Gynner, beginner, 150/4330
 Gyse, guise, mode, 134/3860

 Habitable, habitation, 57/1525
 Habunde, to abound, 41/1073
 Halden, to hold, 41/1053
 Hale, to draw, drag, 61/1665
 Halt, holds, 56/1504
 Hardnesse, hardship, 132/3783
 Hardyly, boldly, 34/857
 Hastise, to hasten, 131/3746
 Haunten, to frequent, 10/168 ; to
 practise, exercise, 52/1389
 Heeres, hairs, 4/12
 Heet, heat, 28/699
 Hef, raised, heaved, 5/41
 Hele, health, 93/2623
 Henten, to seize, 15/326
 Hepen, to heap up, increase, 153/
 4418
 Herburghden, harboured, lodged,
 53/1409
 Herie, to praise, 109/3112
 Hert, hart, 106/3027
 Herted, hearted, 55/1466
 Heve, to raise, heave, 171/4968
 Heved, head, 4/13
 Hevenelyche, heavenly, 8/105
 Hevie, to make heavy, 171/4967
 Hey, high, 22/523
 Heyere, higher, 143/4117
 Heyze, high, 171/4969
 Hielde, pour, 35/899
 Hizte, to adorn, 8/116

 Hoke, hook, 16/347
 Holily, wholly, entirely, 90/2503
 Homelyche, homely, 105/3001
 Hond, hand, 20/449
 Honter, a hunter, 12/228
 Hool, whola, 46/1191
 Hoolnesse, wholness, 164/4754
 Hoope, to hope, 17/384
 Hore, hoary, 4/13
 Humblesse, humility, 80/2213
 Hungry tyme, time of famine, 15/
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 Hurlten, to rush against, to
 oppose, 30/748, 167/4866
 Hyene, hyæna, 185/35
 Hyzt, is called, 9/154, 25/619
 Hyzten, are called, 77/2126

 Ibouzt, bought, 157/4540
 Ibowed, bent, turned, 137/3949
 Icharged, loaded, 71/1962
 Igete, gotten, 36/908
 Ilorn, lost, 62/1677
 Imperial, august (*imperatorius*), 7/
 91
 Implie, to fold, enclose, 152/4379
 Infortune, misfortune, 79/2197
 Inmoeveable, immovable, 173/
 5030
 Inmoeveableté, immobility, 173/
 5032
 Inorschid, nourished, nurtured, 8
 /128
 Inowh, enough, 180/11
 Inperfit, imperfect, 83/2291
 Inplitable (*inexplicabilis*), 15/315
 Inprente, to imprint, 166/4832
 Inpressed, impressed, 167/4861
 Inrest, innermost, 136/3913
 Instaunce (*instantia*), presence,
 174/5067

- Iutil, into, 110/3139
 Inwip, within, 32/801
 Issest, issuest, 105/2983
 Iwist, known, 156/4513
- Jangland, chattering, 68/1867
 Jape-worthi, ridiculous, 157/4540
 Jolyté, pleasure, 79/2189
 Jowes, jaws, 15/323
 Joygnen, to join, 54/1455
 Joynture, juncture, joining, 46/1207
 Juge, a judge, 19/431; to judge, 53/1427
 Jugement, judgment, 114/3253
- Karf (*pret.* of Kerven), cut, 50/1337
 Kembd, KEMBED, combed, 23/537
 Kerve, to cut, 64/1740
 Kevere, cover, obscure, 34/861
 Keye, helm (*clavus*), 103/2926
 Knowelechinge, knowledge, 168/4874
 Knyzt, soldier, 111/3142
 Konnyng, knowledge, 16/351
 Korue (*p.p.*), cut, rent, 6/58
 Kuytten, to cut, 147/4246
 Kyd, known, 181/46
 Kyndeliche, Kyndely, naturally, 101/2850, 114/3228
 Kythen, to make known, show, 184/63
- Lache, slow, lazy, 122/3471
 Lad (*p.p.*), led, 35/879
 Laddre, ladder, 6/55
 Lambyssh, lamb-like, 181/50
 Languisse, to languish, 30/734, 130/3740
 Lappe, flap, 9/146
- Largeesse, liberality, 45/1183
 Lasse, less, 22/508
 Leche, Leecher, physician, 13/850, 114/3254, 139/3990
 Leef, dear, 37/941
 Leesen, Leese, to lose, 22/509, 43/1133
 Lene, to give, 139/3993
 Lenger, longer, 52/1370
 Lesynge, loss, 141/4066
 Lesynge, leasing, lie, 156/4525
 Leten, to leave, 10/176; to esteem, 61/1666
 Leve, permission, leave, 128/3658
 Leveful, allowable, lawful, 10/176
 Ligge, to lie, 60/1632, 147/4251
 Liify, lively, lifelike, 5/33
 Likerous, lecherous, 72/1989
 Litargie, lethargy, 9/140
 Litestere, a dyer, 180/17
 Lokyng, sight, 10/167
 Loos, praise
 Loop, loath, 40/1036
 Lorel, a wretch, 21/495
 Lorn, lost, 34/859
 Lous, loose, free, 136/3926
 Lykyng, pleasure, 31/771
 Lymes, limbs, 71/1946
 Lynage, lineage, 41/1070
 Lythnesse, lightness, 98/2761
 Lyzte goodes, temporal goods, 4/21
 Lyztly, easily, 12/220
 Lyztne, to enlighten, 128/3655
 Lyztnesse, light, brightness, 8/106
- Maat, weary, dejected, 40/1037
 Magistrat, magistracy, 72/1985
 Maistresse, mistress, 10/169

- Malice, *nefas*, wickedness, 20/466
 Malyfice, *maleficium*, 20/468
 Manace, menace, 12/232
 Manase, to menace, 118/3365
 Manassyng, threatening, 44/1158
 Mareis, Mareys, marsh, 56/1513, 97/2735
 Margarits, pearls, 94/2650
 Marye, pith, marrow, 97/2744
 Maugré, in spite of, 70/1928
 Mede, meed, reward, 91/2555
 Medle, to mix, *Medelyng*, mixing, mixture, 20/449, 122/3482, 126/3594
 Meenelyche, moderate, 28/706
 Meistresse, mistress, 17/363
 Melle, mill, 180/6
 Mene, the mean or middle path, 146/4228
 Meremaydenes, mermaids, 7/83
 Merken, to mark, 16/346
 Mervaille, Merveile, marvel, 18/403, 132/3787
 Merveilen, to marvel, 46/1205
 Mervelyng, wondering, 10/161
 Mest, most, 42/1081
 Mesuren, to measure, 65/1782
 Meyné, servants, domestics, 47/1243
 Mirie, pleasant, sweet, 4/16
 Mirinesse, pleasure, 66/1793
 Misericorde, mercy, pity, 107/3057
 Mistourne, to misturn, mislead, 69/1894
 Mochel, great, 62/1674, 109/3110
 Moeveable, mobile, fickle, 133/3817
 Moeven, to move, 8/112, 150/4329
 Moewyng, moving, motion, 130/3742
 Mokere, to hoard up, 45/1182
 Mokere, miser, 45/1182. A mistake for *mokerere*.
 Molesté, trouble, grief, 85/2346
 Monstre, prodigy, 18/403
 More, greater, 129/3697
 Morwe, morning, 22/513
 Mosten (*pl.*), must, 166/4836
 Mot, must, 40/1038
 Mowen, be able, 25/608
 Mowynge, ability, power, 124/3548
 Myche, much, 21/475
 Mychel, much, 46/1215
 Myntyng, purposing, endeavouring, 7/101
 Myrie, pleasant, 45/1165
 Myrily, pleasantly, 59/1582
 Myrpes, pleasures, 132/3782
 Mys, badly, wrongly, 131/3772
 Mysese, grievance, trouble, 15/299
 Mysknowynge, ignorant, 61/1659
 Mysweys, wrong paths, 149/4309
 Naie, to refuse, 4/19
 Naked, to make naked, 148/4288
 Nameles, unrenowned, 131/3762
 Namelyche, Namly, especially, 124/3550
 Nare, were not, 10/176
 Nart, art not, 23/556
 Narwe, narrow, 57/1520
 Nas, was not, 180/9
 Napeles, nevertheless, 6/57
 Nat, not, 23/556
 Necesseden, necessitated, 87/2419
 Nedely, of necessity, 84/2334
 Negardye, (*sb.*) misers, 183/53
 Nere, were not, 26/646

- Nepemaste, lowest, nethermost, 6/56
 Nepereste, lowest, 6/50
 Newe, to renew, 137/3938
 Newliche, recently, 122/3489
 Nice, foolish, 148/4287
 Nil, will not, 107/3055
 Nillynge, being unwilling, 97/2718
 Nilt, wilt not, 112/3193
 Nis, is not, 12/218
 Niste, knew not, 102/2882
 Noblesse, nobleness, 37/947
 Nobley, nobility, nobleness, 37/945
 Nolden, would not, 52/1369
 Norice, nurse, 10/167
 Norisse, to nourish, 79/2174
 Norry, nursling, pupil, 10/173
 Norssinge, nourishment, support, 47/1231; nutriment, 37/932
 Not, know not (*1st pers.*), 27/649
 Notful, useful, 7/85
 Nounpower, impotence, 75/2074
 Noupir, neither, 160/4644
 Noyse, to make a noise (about a thing), to brag, 79/2171
 Nurry (*see* Norry), 86/2386
 Nys, is not, 45/1175

 O, one, 24/564
 Obeisaunt, obedient, 13/266, 32/814
 Object, presented, 168/4889
 Occupy, to seize, 146/4227
 Offence, hurt, damage, 180/19
 Offensioun, offence, 20/473
 Olifuntz, elephants, 80/2223
 Onknowyn, unknown, 180/6
 Onlyche, only, 171/4968
 Onone, Onoon, at once, anon, 23/553, 74/2027
 Ony, any, 21/488
 Ooned, united, 135/3879
 Oor, oar, 50/1338
 Oosteresse, hostess, 122/3495
 Or, ere, before, 9/143
 Ordeinly, orderly, 140/4044
 Ordenour, ordainer, 109/3110
 Ordeyne, orderly, 109/3109
 Ordinat, ordered, settled, 12/229
 Ordinee, orderly, 102/2902
 Ordure, filth, 29/716
 Ostelmentz, furniture, goods, 48/1266
 Operweyes, otherwise (*aliter*), 164/4772
 Outerage, excess, 50/1326
 Outerest, extremest, remotest, 55/1469, 89/2476
 Outerly, utterly, 108/3081
 Outraien, do harm (?), 78/2162
 Over-comere, conqueror, 8/109
 Overmaste, highest, uppermost, 6/57
 Overmyche, overmuch, very much, 79/2191
 Overoolde, very old, 11/209
 Overprowen, prostrate, 21/497
 Overprowyng, forward, head-strong, 7/99, 141/4058
 Overtymelyche, untimely, 4/13
 Owh, an exclamation (*papæ*), 112/3166
 Owtrage, excess, 180/5

 Paied, satisfied, 58/1549
 Paleis, pale, 24/574
 Palude, marsh, 148/4262
 Paraventure, peradventure, 18/402
 Parchemyn, parchment, 166/4835

- Parsoners, sharers, partakers, 170/4942
 Partles, without a share, 120/3409
 Pas, paces, 19/442
 Paysyble, peaceable, peaceful, 180/1
 Peisable, quiet, placid, 23/550, 88/2450
 Percen, to pierce, 81/2236
 Perdurable, lasting, perpetual, 5/44, 21/503
 Perdurableté, immortality, 58/1557
 Perfitlyche, *Perfitly*, perfectly, 87/2426, 133/3833
 Perfourny, to afford, furnish, 67/1823
 Perisse, to perish, 96/2712
 Perturbacioun, perturbation, 7/98
 Perverte, to destroy, 11/201
 Payne, punishment, 121/3439
 Piment, a kind of drink, 50/1329
 Plenté, fulness, 173/5037
 Plentevous, affluent, 67/1824
 Plentivous, yielding abundantly, fertile, 64/1739
 Plentivously, abundantly, 25/592
 Plete, argue, plead, 33/833
 Pletyngus, pleadings, debates (at law), 70/1933
 Pleyne, to complain, 31/777
 Pleynellyche, plainly, 28/681
 Pleynt, complaint, 110/3122
 Plonge, Ploungen, to plunge, 7/89, 65/1784
 Ploungy, wet, rainy (*imbrifer*), 64/1745
 Polute, polluted, 20/450
 Pose, to put a case, cf. put a *poser*, 162/4686
 Pousté, power, 131/3762
 Pownage, pasturage, 180/7
 Poyntel, style, 166/4838
 Preiere, prayer, 107/3044
 Preisen, to estimate, judge, 7/379
 Preisyng, praising, 77/2131
 Preke, to prick, 85/2346
 Prenostik, prognostic, 183/54
 Presentarie, present, 178/5196
 Preterit, preterite, past, 171/4990
 Pretorie, the imperial body-guard, 15/317
 Prevé, secret, 121/3464
 Preven, to prove, 90/2503
 Prie, to pray, 25/600
 Pris, value; 'worpi of *pr^{is}*,' precious, 24/583
 Proche, to approach, 145/4182
 Proeve, to approve, 154/4456
 Punisse, to punish, 22/531
 Puplisse, to publish, spread, propagate, 58/1549, 98/2753
 Purper, purple, 25/617
 Purpose, to propose, 176/5148
 Purveaunce, providence, 134/3863
 Purveiable, provident, foreseeing, 68/1854
 Purveie, to ordain, order, 21/478
 Purvyance, providence, 99/2795
 Quereles, complaints, 70/1932
 Quik, living, 134/3839
 Quyene, queen, 183/43
 Quyerne, a mill, 180/6
 Rafte, bereft, 147/4259
 Raper, earlier, former, 30/735
 Raviner, a plunderer, 12/228
 Ravische, to snatch, 11/190
 Ravyne, plunder, rapine, 15/302, 36/909

- Ravynour, plunderer, 121/3460
 Ravysse, to carry off, 131/3774
 Real, royal, 19/420
 Recche, to care, reck, 33/827, 38/987
 Recompensacioun, recompense, 130/3724
 Recorde, to recount, recall, 92/2580, 101/2871
 Reddowr, severity, rigour, 182/13
 Redenesse, redness, flushing, 7/88
 Redoutable, venerable, 131/3763
 Redoute, to fear, 10/178, 57/1535
 Redy = rody, red, ruddy, 39/995
 Refet, refreshed, 143/4116
 Reft (away), carried off, 22/521
 Refut, refuge, 94/2644
 Regne, kingdom, 67/1843
 Regnen, to reign, rule, 29/726
 Remewe, to remove, 19/441
 Remorde, to vex, trouble, 140/4030
 Remuable, able to remove from one place to another, 168/4898
 Remuen, to remove, 52/1394
 Renomed, renowned, 41/1070, 78/2143
 Renovele, to renew, 98/2752
 Replenisse, to replenish, 20/469
 Reprere, to reprove, 167/4857
 Repugnien, to be repugnant to, 154/4440
 Requerable, desirable, 52/1377
 Requere, to require, 99/2790
 Rescove, to recover, 133/3809
 Rescove, to rescue, 35/881
 Resolve, to loosen, melt, 133/3814
 Resoune, to resound, 107/3036
 Rethoryen, rhetorical, 30/759
 Rewlyche, pitiable, sorrowful, 35/878
 Risorse = recourse (*recursus*), course, 8/108
 Rody, ruddy, 143/4122
 Roos, roes, 82/2258
 Rosene, roseat, 8/117
 Route, company, 47/1243
 Royle, to run, roll, 29/717
 Rynnyng, running, 50/1335
 Ryztwisnesse, righteousness, equity, 16/331
 Sachel, satchel, sack, 12/223
 Sad, stable, 41/1064
 Saddenesse, stability, 110/3123
 Sarpuler, a sack made of coarse cloth (*Sarcinula*), 12/223
 Sauuacioun, safety, salvation, 97/2723
 Sauz, Say, saw, 8/106, 9/137
 Saye, sawest, 37/958
 Schad, shed, 4/13
 Schrew, a wicked person, a wretch, 12/217
 Schrewed, wicked, 18/398
 Schrewednesse, wickedness, 18/401, 117/3324
 Schronk, shrunk, 5/38
 Schulden (*pl.*), should, 9/132
 Schullen (*pl.*), shall, 25/605
 Seom, foam, froth, 148/4281
 Scripture, writing, 17/382
 Sege, seat, 13/258
 Seien (*pl.*), saw, 51/1344
 Seien (*p.p.*), seen, 6/54
 Selde, seldom, 133/3818
 Seler, cellar, 35/890
 Selily, happily, blissfully, 42/1076
 Selve, very, 5/42
 Semblable, like, 48/1279
 Semblaunce, likeness, 142/4106
 Semblaunt, appearance, countenance, 5/31

- Senglely, singly, 85/2369
 Sensibillites, sensations, 166/4830
 Servage, servitude, 153/4411
 Sewe, to follow, 88/2441
 Seye, sawest, 37/955
 Seyntuaries, sanctuaries, 16/343
 Shad, divided, spread, 136/3922
 Sholdres, shoulders, 148/4281
 Sich, such, 6/67
 Sikerly, certainly, 94/2635
 Singler, individual, single, 57/1529
 Singlerly, singly, 135/3890
 Sittying, fitting, becoming, 10/176
 Skilynge, reason, 137/3931
 Slaken, to slake (hunger), 50/1326
 Slede, sledge, 110/3131
 Sleen, Slen, to slay, 53/1409, 55/1460
 Slouz, slew, 55/1461
 Smaragde, emerald, 94/2650
 Smerte, to smart, pain, 39/1011
 Smot, smota, 147/4254
 Smoþe, smooth, 8/112
 Sodeyn, sudden, 10/161
 Somedel, somewhat, 25/606
 Somer, summer, 22/517
 Songen (*p.p.*), sung, 108/3078
 Soory, sorry, grievous, 38/978
 Soþe, true, 17/377, 118/3352
 Soþefastly, truly, 89/2481
 Sopely, truly, 169/4918
 Sopenesse, truth, 26/641
 Sothfast, true, 61/1652
 Soun, sound, 68/1852
 Soune, to sound, 37/929
 Sounyng, sounding, roaring, 8/111
 Sovereynne, supreme, 90/2508
 Sovereynely, supremely, 91/2545
 Sourmounte, to surpass, 80/2223
 Spece, species, 165/4789
 Speculacioun, looking, contemplation, 153/4408
 Spedeful, Spedful, efficacious, conducive, 125/3570, 161/4671
 Speden, to make clear, explain, 161/4667
 Spere, sphere, 8/108
 Sperkele, spark, 104/2971
 Sprad, spread (*p.p.*), 9/156
 Stableté, stability, 137/3950
 Stablise, to establish, 134/3860
 Stably, firmly, 135/3890
 Stappe, step, 170/4963
 Staunche, to satisfy, 71/1948, 1961
 Stere, to move (*agitare*), 106/3015
 Sterre, star, 36/903
 Sterry, starry, 36/904
 Starten, to start, 104/2971
 Stidefastnesse, stability, strength, 97/2748
 Stidfast, steadfast, 182/17
 Stien, to ascend, 88/2444
 Stiere, *steer*, rudder (*gubernaculum*), 103/2926
 Stiern, stern, 60/1628
 Stoon, stone, 45/1165
 Stormyng, making stormy, 29/712
 Stont, stands, 9/154
 Stoundes, times, 178/5187
 Strauȝt, stretched, extended, 170/4957
 Strengere, stronger, 12/221
 Strenkeþ, strength, 12/240
 Streyhte, stretched, 63/1702
 Streyne, to restrain, 150/4325

- Strond, strand, 51/1339
 Strook, stroke, 153/4433
 Strumpet, 6/66
 Styte, to ascend, 143/4117
 Stynte, to stop, 37/929
 Styntyng, stopping, ceasing, 61/1638
 Suasioun, persuasion (*suadela*), 30/759
 Subgit, subject, 48/1273
 Submytte, to compel, force (*summitto*), 19/434
 Sudeyn, sudden, 30/752
 Suffisaunce, sufficiency, 70/1922
 Suffisaunt, sufficient, 70/1924
 Suffisauntly, sufficiently, 133/3833
 Summitte, Summytte, to submit, 49/1288, 136/3924
 Superfice, surface, 81/2238
 Supplien, to supplicate, 80/2210
 Surté, security, 181/46
 Sustigne, to sustain, 183/41
 Sweighe, whirl, circular motion (*turbo*), 22/504
 Swerd, sword, 19/438
 Swety, sweaty, 181/28
 Sweyes, whirlings, 32/816
 Swich, such, 20/446
 Swolwe, to swallow, 98/2777
 Syker, secure, safe, 12/224, 16/333
 Sykernes, security, safety, 9/132
 Symplesse, simplicity, 136/3914
 Syn, since, 31/789
 Sypen, since, 32/802
 Talent, affection, desire, will, 6/71, 168/4887
 Taylage, tollage, 181/524
 þar, need, 38/987
 þerwhiles, whilst, 176/5150
 þilke, the same, that, 99/2814
 þo, þoo (*pl.*), the, 11/200, 168/4886
 þondre, thunder, 45/1166
 þoruz, through, 11/202
 þreschefolde, threshold, 7/89
 þrest, thirst, 36/914, 71/1945
 þreste, þresten, thrust, 47/1237, 148/4283
 Throf, throve, flourished, 74/2050
 þrust, thirst, 107/3053
 Til, to, 69/1891
 Tilier, a tiller, 151/4352
 To-breke, break in pieces, 88/2447
 Todrowen (*pl.*), drew asunder, 11/193
 Toforne, before, 177/5184
 Togidres, together, 53/1421
 To hepe, together, 140/4029
 Tokene, to token, 26/624
 Tollen, to draw, 56/1496
 Torenten (*pl.*), rent asunder, 11/194
 To-teren, tear in pieces, 68/1865
 Traas, Trais, trace, track, 170/4958, 4963
 Transporten, throw on (*trans-ferre*), 19/419
 Travaille, labour, toil, 10/174
 Travayle, to toil, labour, 64/1754
 Travayle, labour, 148/4286
 Tregedie, tragedy, 77/2126
 Tregedien, tragedian, 77/2125
 Trenden, to roll, turn, 100/2835
 Troublable, troublesome, 118/3369
 Trouble, turbid, stormy, 29/711
 Troubly, troubled, cloudy (*nubilus*), 133/3819
 Trowen, to throw, believe, 20/468, 152/4399

- Twitre, to twitter, 68/1875
 Twynkel, to wink, 38/971
 Tylienge, tilling, 151/4347
 Tyren, to tear, 107/3055

 Umblesse, humility, 181/55
 Unagreeable, unpleasant, disagreeable, 4/25
 Unassaiep, untried, 42/1082
 Unbitide, not to happen, 161/4678
 Unbowed, unbent, 148/4284
 Uncovenable, unmeet, importunate (*importunus*), 141/4058
 Unde fouled, undefiled, 40/1023
 Undepartable, inseparable, 120/3422
 Underput, put under, subject, 28/696
 Understonde, to understand, 30/733, 43/1120
 Undigne, unworthy, 54/1444
 Undirneþ, underneath, 75/2074
 Undiscomfited, not discomfited (*invictus*), 12/232
 Undoutous, indubitable, 149/4315
 Uneschewably, unavoidably, 157/4531
 Ungentil, ignoble, 41/1070
 Ungrobbed, ungrubbed, 180/14
 Unhonestee, disreputableness, 24/587
 Unhoped, unexpected, 139/4006
 Université, whole, 165/4797
 Unjoynen, Unjoynnen, to separate, 151/4373
 Unknowyng, ignorant, 139/3997
 Unknyttten, to unloose (*dissolvere*), 154/4459
 Unkonnyng, Unkunnyng, unknowing, ignorant, 7/76, 11/202
 Unkorven, uncut, 180/14
 Unkouþ, unknown, foreign, 34/870
 Unlace, to disentangle, 105/2982
 Unleueful, illicit, unlawful, 154/4456
 Unmeke, fierce, cruel, 148/4267
 Unmoeveable, immovable, 136/3901
 Unmoeveableté, immobility, 136/3921
 Unmyzty, weak, impotent, 13/241
 Unneþ, scarcely, 27/652
 Unparygal, unequal, 63/1708
 Unpitouse, cruel, 4/24
 Unpleyten, to explain, 61/1647
 Unplite, explain, unfold, 167/4843
 Unpunished, unpunished, 21/498
 Unpurveyed, unforeseen, 30/743
 Unraced, unbroken, whole, 110/3115
 Unryztful, unjust, 10/185
 Unryztfully, unrightfully, unjustly, 23/533
 Unscience, unreal knowledge, no knowledge, 156/4515
 Unsely, wretched, 39/1013
 Unselynesse, wretchedness, 124/3544
 Unskilfuly, unwisely, improperly, 18/407
 Unsolempne, not famous, not celebrated, 11/210
 Unsowe, unsown, 180/10
 Unspedful, unsuccessful, 178/5210
 Unstauncheable, unlimited, infinite, 58/1573
 Unstaunched, uncurbed, unrestrained, 54/1439
 Unsuffrable, intolerable, 79/2179
 Unusage, unfrequency, 57/1528

- Untretable, inexorable, implacable, 61/1641
 Unwar, unexpected, 35/886
 Unwarly, unaware, unexpectedly, 4/10
 Unwemmed, inviolate, 40/1023, 178/5201
 Unwened, unexpected, 139/4006
 Unwoot, knows not, 175/5099
 Unworshipful, dishonoured, 75/2054
 Uphepyng, heaping up, 37/951
 Upsodown, upside down, 48/1274, 156/4501
 Upsprong, upsprung, 180/10
 Used, accustomed, wonted, 22/512
 Uterreste, extremest, outermost, 7/95
 Vanisse, to vanish, 74/2027
 Variaunt, varying, 22/518
 Vengerisse, a she-avenger, 107/3048
 Verray, Verrey, true, 19/429
 Vilfully (Wilsfully), wilfully, 116/3295
 Voide, having an empty purse (*vacuus*), 50/1316
 Voyded (of), emptied of, free from, 181/50
 Wakyng, watchful, 148/4263
 Walwe, to toss, 51/1361
 Walwyng, tossing, 29/712
 Wan, did win, 147/4240
 War, be aware, take care, 145/4200
 Warne, to refuse, deny, 37/950
 Wawe, a wave, 8/115
 Wayk, weak, 28/706
 Weep (*pret.*), wept, 35/883
 Welde, wild, 180/17. It may mean *boiled*, since another copy reads *wellyd*.
 Welful, Welful, prosperous, joyful, 4/15
 Welfulnesse, Welfulnesse, prosperity, felicity, 11/188, 21/478
 Welken, to wither, fade, 146/4224
 Welkne, welkin, 184/62
 Welle, well, source, 157/4548
 Wende, weened, thought, 53/1397
 Wenge, wing, 170/4961
 Wenyng, opinion, 172/5022
 Wepen (*p.p.*), wept, 25/596
 Wepli, tearful, 5/29
 Werdes, fates, destinies, 4/10
 Werreye, to make war, 181/25
 Weten, to know, 156/4519
 Wex, wax, 167/4840
 Weyve, to waive, forsake, 29/722
 Wham, whom, 89/2482
 Whelwe, to toss, roll, 39/1001
 Whiderward, whither, 177/5171
 Whist, hushed, 51/1341
 Wierdes, fates, destinies, 12/231
 Wikke, wicked, bad, 64/1743
 Willyng, desire, 178/5203
 Wilne, to desire, 17/367
 Wilnyng, desire, 98/2781
 Wirche, to work, 12/235
 Wirchyng, working, operation, 95/2677
 Wist, known, 170/4937
 Witen, to know, learn, 88/2458, 132/3776, 160/4624
 Wipdrow, withdrew, 64/1751
 Wiphalden, to withhold, 142/4105
 Wipoute forþe, outwardly, 165/4803
 Wipseid, denied, 90/2501

- Wipstant, withstand, 29/715
 Wipstonde (*p.p.*), withstood, 14/290
 Witnesfully, attestedly, publicly, 131/3765
 Witynge, knowledge, 156/4526
 Wod, woad, 180/17
 Wod, Wode, mad, raging, 12/225
 Wode, wood, 39/995
 Wodenesse, rage, madness, 45/1169, 107/3052
 Wolen (*pl.*), will, 94/2645
 Woltow, wilt thou, 97/2741
 Wone, to dwell, 60/1627
 Woode, Wode, furious, mad, 25/600
 Woode, to rage, 123/3515
 Woodnesse, rage, madness, 107/3052
 Woot, knows, 43/1128
 Wope, to weep, 36/905
 Worchen, to work, 178/5215
 Wost, knowest, 19/423
 Woxe, to increase, wax, grow, 25/608
 Woxen (*p.p.*), grown, 25/607
 Wrekere, avenger, 128/3665
 Wrekynge, vengeance, 147/4238
 Wropely, grieved, sad, 7/87
 Wrypen, twist, turn, wrest, 154/4452
 Wymple, to cover with a veil or wimple, 31/774
 Wyt, sense, 164/4771
 Wyȝt, wight, person, 19/425
 Yave (*pl.*), gave, 180/4
 Yben, been, 162/4698
 Ybeyen, to obey, 105/2998
 Ycauȝt, caught, captured, 118/3371
 Ycleped, called, 150/4346
 Ydel, '*in ydel*,' in vain, 5/43
 Ydred, feared, 33/825
 Yfelawshipped, associated, united, 53/1421
 Yficched, fixed, 136/3910
 Yfinissed, finished, 125/3558
 Yflit, flitted, removed, 8/108
 Ygeten, gotten, 65/1776
 Yhardid, hardened, 133/3814
 Yheued, made heavy, 171/4974
 Ylad, led, 37/956, 172/5022
 Ylete, permitted, 130/3730
 Ylett, hindered, 161/4674
 Ylorn, lost, 147/4250
 Ymaginable, possessing imagination, 166/4812
 Ymaked, made, 87/2426
 Ymedeled, mixed, 140/4029
 Ynouȝ, enough, 71/1947
 Yplitid, pleated, folded, 9/147
 YPORVEYD, YPURVEID, foreseen, 155/4467, 4468
 Ysen, seen, 72/1982
 Yshad, shed, scattered, 68/1874
 Yshet, shut, 170/4955
 Ysmyte, smitten, 80/2202
 Yspedd, made clear, determined, 161/4657; despatched, 149/4295
 Yspendyd, examined (*expediero*), 161/4668
 Ysprad, spread, 78/2140
 Yspranid, sprinkled, mixed, 42/1102. *Read* yspraind.
 Ystrenged, strengthened, 175/5098
 Ypewed, behaved, 139/4008
 Yprongen, pressed, squeezed, 57/1521
 Ytravailed, laboured, 155/4469
 Ytretid, handled, performed, 131/3765

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| Yvel, evil, 105/2976 | Ȝelden, to yield, 149/4303 |
| Ywened, believed, 145/4178 | Ȝeve, to give, 149/4291 |
| Ywist, known, 155/4475 | Ȝevyng, giving, 45/1188 |
| Ywoven, woven, 6/51 | Ȝif, if, 9/131 |
| Ywyst, known, 164/4759 | Ȝis, yes, 103/2919 |
| Ȝeven, given, 141/4069 | Ȝisterday, yesterday, 171/4994 |
| | Ȝitte, yet, 156/4508 |
| Ȝaf, gave, 8/130 | Ȝok, Ȝokke, yoke, 32/802, 60/1620 |
| Ȝeelde, Ȝelde, seldom, 39/1002,
52/1372 | Ȝolde (<i>p.p.</i>), yielded, 25/599 |
| Ȝeld, yielded, 147/4253 | Ȝonge, young, 35/889 |
| | Ȝouȝe, youth, 10/168 |

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